MASTERS OF MUSIC

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

OUR FAVOURITE MUSICIANS: from Stanford to Holbrooke (1922)

FAVOURITE MUSICAL PERFORMERS: from John Coates to Albert Sammons (1923).

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THE RECITER'S TEXT-BOOK OF HEROIC VERSE (*in preparation*).

THE ORIGIN OF OPERA (*in preparation*).

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BEETHOVEN IN THE WOODS

MASTERS OF MUSIC

By

SYDNEY GREW

I state it thus,
There is no truer truth obtainable
By Man than comes of music.

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To
A. J. PRIESTLEY
and in memory of
E. W. PRIESTLEY
Born 1865
Died 1908

PREFACE

Some knowledge of the personality of a composer is almost essential for a satisfactory understanding and appreciation of his work. Certain melodic turns and harmonic expressions are characteristic of most composers of originality, and it is this particular strain of utterance that enables us without difficulty to recognize the music of Wagner when we hear it. The grand sublimity of Bach, the delicate fancy of Mozart, the rugged energy of Beethoven, the exquisite sensitiveness of Chopin indicate in no uncertain manner the individuality of the man within the music.

Mr. Sydney Grew is a reliable guide to the young student who desires a helpful introduction to the lives and works of the great masters of music.

GRANVILLE BANTOCK

The University,
Birmingham

The chapter on Liszt, and the poem which appears (in part) on page 158, are reprinted by permission from "The Strad" and "The Choir" respectively.

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INTRODUCTORY

INTRODUCTORY

YOUNG people seem to look on history as a series of names, dates, and specified works, with less and less of real warm life as the period recedes into the past. In the matter of musical history, when they start to study the personality of composers and performers, they seem to receive the idea that the men and women are either god-like perfections or receptacles for all the peculiarities and misfortunes that fall on humanity.

Without doubt, some musicians are peculiar ; but this is because they are peculiar, not because they are musicians. Their counterparts exist in other walks. It is certain that many musicians are unfortunate, having to struggle—almost to the point of despair—with harsh conditions ; but so do all other sorts of men and women, trouble being no preserve of the artist. We should try to learn what is normal in a musician rather than what is abnormal, because in the greater world of art it is the final average normality of things which is represented and expressed.

History is as alive as is the present day. It is, indeed, only the present completed. We ought to look on it in the way we look on a panorama of which we know the ending with the beginning—or, better, in the way we receive a composition in the Cyclic form, of which the last sections, the first, and the middle, are inseparably unified, so that the composition can be regarded mentally as a statue by the eye. And a work of historical

character should be understood as a picture of its time ; we may not want it for its qualities of beauty, but by imagination and applied general knowledge we ought to be able to make it as vivid as an historical romance in fiction.

The object of the present book, as of similar books, is no more than to tell young people something about the composers included in its plan. It contains no original research, but only matter known to professional musicians. It does not offer full biographies, first because space does not permit them, and secondly because full biographies can be found in dictionaries and encyclopædias and histories. In the case of composers of long life, it follows the records only to the point where the composer won public success, for the reason that the earlier portion of such a life is that which most interests young people, and for the further reason that the latter part of a life like Wagner's or Beethoven's is too bound up with vast issues of art to be narrated without consideration of those issues. The book does not discuss the science and technology of music, except lightly here and there, those matters being postponed for a further volume. It contains criticism only so far as seems necessary to start the young reader on the path of personal critical observation. Therefore such a book as this is not for cultured grown-up professional musicians, and is not to be judged as though it were. It will justify itself if it helps young music-lovers to feel the

humanity of a few great master-composers, and it will be (in the author's opinion) successful if it blows away some of the Jovian thunder-clouds from their brows and puts out some of the flames that dart forth their eyes, all as per the average sentimental account of the masters

I. THE BEGINNING OF MODERN MUSIC

What is music? The question filled my mind last night for hours before I fell asleep. Its very existence is a wonder—I might even say it is a miracle. The domain of music is between thought and phenomena. It hovers, like a twilight mediator, between spirit and matter, related to both, yet differing from each: music is spirit, but spirit subject to the measurement of time; and it is matter, but matter that can dispense with space.—HEINE.

What art thou? from what causes dost thou spring,
O Music! thou divine mysterious thing?
Art thou the warmth in spring which Zephire breathes,
Painting the meads, and whistling through the leaves?
The happy season, that each care beguiles,
When God is pleas'd, and all creation smiles?
Or art thou love, that mind to mind imparts
The endless concord of agreeing hearts?
Or art thou friendship, yet a nobler flame,
That can, a purer way, make souls the same. . . ?

"R.G.," On the death of Purcell (1702).

MODERN MUSIC

I

Music is one of the mysteries of the world. It is an art among arts ; yet while we can describe, and (if we wish) explain, the other arts of painting, sculpture, poetry, and even architecture, the mysterious art of music eludes us.

There is not much difficulty in explaining its forms : melody, harmony, accent, rhythm, the proportion of parts, and the grouping of large sections so as to build up an elaborate structure—these can be expounded as clearly as the geography of a country. Provided that we have ample space and full knowledge, we can expound the music of an age or place quite as well as we can expound the religion, say, of the age or place.

Yet in the end we find that we have failed to solve the mystery : we realize that we have not "explained" this art ; fortunately, however, the attempt has been profitable, first in proving to us that there is no need for it to be explained, and secondly in quickening our minds to the perception of its beauty and power. And then, early or late in our general reading, we find that a few great men of another art—the art of poetry—have, by the exercise of genius equal to that of the makers of music, managed to say what music is and what it means ; and we receive the same mysterious pleasure out of poems like Browning's "Abt Vogler" and Whitman's "Proud Music of the Storm" as out of Bach's

Chromatic Fantasia or Beethoven's *Sonata appassionata*.

The musical faculty has had the slowest growth of the powers of humanity with which we are at present acquainted. Modern music had its beginning less than four hundred years ago. Apart from song- and dance-tunes and church melodies, nothing has life and character for us which comes from an earlier period than the end of the sixteenth century.

If the poetic faculty, for instance, had grown thus slowly, there would be no Chaucer, no Dante, no Virgil, no Homer, and none of the poetry of the Old Testament. Poetry would have remained at the stage represented by heroic ballads, little love lyrics, and religious hymns. Spenser and Shakespeare would have been the first men in history of poetic individuality. If the architectural faculty had had the same slow growth, only tents and simple roofed dwellings would have existed before the time Wolsey built his palace at Hampton.

But those other faculties developed and became complete thousands of years ago ; and there is a world of beauty still existing for us out of the product of other days, in poetry, sculpture, and architecture.

Those three arts had the advantage of per manence. Material of stone does not quickly decay and poetry can be readily copied and as readily passed from mouth to mouth. Only

simple tunes can be handed from one to another ; and painting decays.

Music, as we know it to-day, began to develop in the generation when sailors first learned to sail far out of sight of land. Musicians first learned how to write without the support of a poetic text in the century Columbus sailed across the Atlantic, opening the way to the New World. It developed with great rapidity and sureness, and by the time Drake went round the earth this art of ours was, in two or three respects, as firm and grand as the art of the poets. The music of Italians, Germans, and Englishmen between 1550 and 1625 is as full of character in its own way, and so as full as life and meaning for us, as is the poetry of the men of those three countries.

But this statement is true only with that reservation "*in its own way.*" Our Thomas Morley, born in 1557 or 1558, John Dowland (1563-1626) and Thomas Campion (1567-1620) wrote songs, but not songs as Schubert, Brahms, and Hugo Wolf wrote them. William Byrd (1543-1623) and Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1526-1594) wrote church music—masses and motets that have the eternal beauty and sublimity of liturgical and biblical texts ; but their music does not achieve the particular beauty and sublimity of Mozart's chamber music and Beethoven's symphonies. The composers of Shakespeare's time were worthy companions of Shakespeare ; but where Shakespeare was in himself as Palestrina, Bach,

Beethoven, and Wagner (his art being finally developed nearly two thousand years before he was born), his musical contemporaries lacked such all-embracingness and universality.

Two more generations had to pass before the art of music found itself fully in Purcell, Handel, and Bach, and another two generations before it became of Shakespearean completeness in Mozart and Beethoven.

And Beethoven, who was born as recently as 1770, a year later than Napoleon, was the first composer whose art moved the entire world, forcing men of other arts who were not themselves musical by nature to recognize music along with poetry, drama, and the plastic arts.

This means that the universal recognition of music goes back no further than the overthrow of Napoleon Bonaparte in 1815; a fact that is almost as mysterious as the nature of the art itself.

By reacting on the music of the past, the modern world has gradually recognized earlier manners of composition. Bach became a mighty power from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards. Sixteenth-century music—the music of Palestrina and his school, was first studied exhaustively from about 1880. It is in our own day, the twentieth century, that the music of our Elizabethans has begun to be really understood and properly appreciated.

The process of recovery in Art-Music cannot

extend beyond the sixteenth century, for the already-stated reason that Art-Music has no earlier existence.

II

Our work together in this book being to gain portraits of some of the masters of music, we must begin not earlier than Henry Purcell, the favourite composer of the final quarter of the seventeenth century, whose generation—the age of Charles II, James, and William and Mary—is already clear in our minds. We know little of the earlier masters. They do not stand out with sufficient individuality to be sketched briefly. And they are so bound to their time that we can visualize them only in the exact light of the time, which is not a clear light for most young people. The musicians of Shakespeare's period were fully alive, of course : musicians and poets met at the Mermaid Tavern ; and musicians loved musicians, or regarded them with the high regard of impartial criticism, exactly as poets held themselves to poets. But we have no contemporary newspaper writings, no biographies, letters, or autobiographies, and no lengthy expressions of personal or critical opinion, out of which pictures are made. And, again, few of us as yet (1924) have passed into the full understanding and enjoyment of their music.

Yet it will be well for the student of music and musicians to realize, at the outset of his work, the

fine spirit of these first masters, the high regard they had of their fellow-workers, and the general esteem in which the poet in particular held the composer.

A spirit like that of Liszt was active, and true music was thought a noble thing in those days. (A hundred and fifty years later it was rather despised in certain quarters, or at least the musician was despised, looked on as a sort of servant, much as the family chaplain.) Elizabethan literature has many references to music, from Shakespeare's powerful assertion that the man without the spirit and qualities of music in his nature must be a bad man, to the sonnet of young Barnfield that will be quoted in a moment. And the musicians themselves, it seems, loved and honoured the greater masters : thus Morley, writing in 1597, said of his teacher and friend William Byrd, that he was " never without reverence to be named of the musicians," and John Baldwin, after copying one of Byrd's pieces for the virginals, wrote against the piece the words " Homo mirabilis." Byrd's own remarks to the users of his music are as the voice of a friend ; and the dignity of his expressions is equal to the dignity of his music. At the beginning of his *Songs of Sundry Natures* (1589), he says that he gives out this set of works because (in his words) " I would show myself grateful to thee for thy love," ending with the promise, " I will make myself indebted to thee during my life, of what-

soever is in me, to yield thy delight in music any satisfaction." In his last set of vocal works to English words—the *Psalms, Songs, and Sonnets* of 1611—he has a paragraph which not only states the full principles of performance, but expresses in brief the entire matter of true Musical Appreciation. This paragraph runs as follows :

> Only this I desire, that you will be but as careful to hear them [the compositions] well expressed as I have been both in the composing and correcting of them. Otherwise, the best song that ever was made will seem harsh and unpleasant ; for that the well-expressing of them, either by voices or instruments, is the life of our labours—which is seldom, or never, well performed at the first singing or playing. Besides, a song that is well and artificially made [i.e., according to the laws of high art] cannot be well perceived, nor understood, at the first hearing : but the oftener you shall hear it the better cause of liking you will discover : and commonly that song is best esteemed with which our ears are most acquainted.
>
> As I have done my best endeavour to give you content, so I beseech you satisfy my desire in hearing them well expressed ; and then, I doubt not, for art and air both of skilful and ignorant they will deserve liking.
>
> Vale. Thine, W. Byrd.

The companionableness underlying these sentences—written, as they were, by a great and successful man in his seventieth year—is such that we feel the man to be a friend of our own.

It is good to have friendship with these great men. Friendships are necessary, and we look for them all through life ; but none are quite so happy, and none are in any way so certain, as those between us and a man or woman, dead in the body it may be a thousand years, but in his or her works living with a more vivid life than our own. The quick way into music is by the path of friendship. It is well, indeed, to learn to love men like Purcell, Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Liszt ; to cherish what survives of their written words or recorded conversation, and to apprehend the often-overlooked truth that they are not names belonging to an abstract history, but concrete human beings, who while on the earth had troubles and pleasures, looked up dates in the calendar, hated muddy ink, and had particular tastes and fancies in the matter of food. Loving these men, we seem to have them for guides into the heart of their music.

Richard Barnfield (who lived from 1574 to 1627, but who was a poet only to the age of twenty-four) represents the warmly appreciative young Elizabethan. He was the first to praise Shakespeare, and he passionately admired other poets—Spenser, Drayton, Daniel, and the rest of his generation. His regard for the musicians was

not quite so great ; but the well-known sonnet now copied here shows that his rapture over poetry was exactly paralleled by the rapture of other persons over the music of the time :

If music and sweet poetry agree,
As they must needs, the sister and the brother,
Then must the love be great 'twixt thee and me
Because thou lovest the one, and I the other.
Dowland to thee is dear, whose heavenly touch
Upon the lute doth ravish human sense ;
Spenser to me, whose deep conceit is such
As, passing all conceit, needs no defence.
Thou lovest to hear the sweet melodious sound
That Phœbus' lute, the Queen of Music, makes ;
And I in deep delight am chiefly drown'd
Whenas himself to singing he betakes.
One god is god of both, as poets feign ;
One knight loves both, and both in thee remain.

And so the first great phase of art-music was happy in its conditions. The men were great and they had generous admirers. It is scarcely likely that we shall ever have knowledge of their personalities as we have of the personalities of later musicians ; and until we get thoroughly into the heart of their music we shall not be able to create them thoroughly in the region of imagination. But enough is on record to show us the kind of men they were ; and since a loving

thought is twice-revealing, exposing the best of him that thinks it and of him to whom it is addressed, the written remarks of the first composers are precious : we love both Morley and Byrd, when we understand the full significance of the declaration that Byrd was *never without reverence to be named of the musicians*.

III

A general change came over western and southern Europe after the year 1600. It had been in preparation for more than a hundred years, and was the change from the Mediæval to the Modern. Historians class Palestrina and Byrd with the Mediæval Period of music ; Purcell (1658-1695) they would call an early modern.

The change affected all art and thought, because it was a change of mind and so a change in the way of looking at things. Ideas became simpler, and in consequence expression became lighter. In architecture the builders left the richly complex Gothic forms and adopted either the clear straight lines of ancient Greek and Roman architectural forms or the kinds of design which, in that art, are called Italian. In poetry the change was as from Milton to Dryden ; these two men were contemporaries, but Milton was a mediævalist born late in time. In music, it was from " plural-melody " to " monody."

If you stand inside a cathedral and watch the lines of the design, allowing the lines to assume actual movement—progression to and from definite points, up, down, across, direct, interrupted, sequential, basal, decorative, and so forth—you will after a while perceive the underlying unity of the design : you will see that, at the root of the seeming complexity, is a structural idea as elementary as that of the phrase *The wind blew and the storm arose ;* but the idea is, in the architectural plan, expressed with the apparently endless power and richness of the winds and the storms themselves.

The architecture of the Gothic cathedral is like the plural-melody of the musicians before Purcell and Handel.

Let us clearly understand this matter by illustration from poetry. Here are two passages, one from Milton, the other from Dryden. Milton's language is rich, more harmony than melody, and charged with a power of accent and rhythm that all readers feel in a moment, though none can feel to the full who has not studied the art and science of English metre :

He ask'd, but all the Heav'nly Quire stood mute,
And silence was in Heav'n : on man's behalf
Patron or Intercessor none appear'd,
Much less that durst upon his own head draw
The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.
And now without redemption all mankind

Must have been lost, adjudg'd to Death and Hell
By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
In whom the fulness dwells of love divine,
His dearest mediation thus renew'd.

Father, thy word is past, man shall find grace ;
And shall grace not find means, that finds her way
(The speediest of thy winged messengers)
To visit all thy creatures, and to all
Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unsought,
Happy for man, so coming ; he her aid
Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost ;
Attonement for himself or offering meet,
Indebted and undone, hath none to bring :
Behold mee then, mee for him, life for life
I offer, on mee let thine anger fall ;
Account mee man ; I for his sake will leave
Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
Freely put off, and for him lastly die
Well pleas'd, on me let Death wreck all his rage ;
Under his gloomy power I shall not long
Lie vanquisht. . . .

Paradise Lost, iii, 217-243.

Observe how the thought flows on, line after line, and how involved is the syntax, phrase striking into clause, and clause striking into sentence.

On the contrary, Dryden's language is like a simple melody, of no depth despite the great matter it deals with, and so simple of rhythm that we can almost sing-song the recitation :

So, when of old the Almighty Father sate
In council, to redeem our ruined state,
Millions of millions, at a distance round,
Silent the sacred consistory crowned,
To hear what mercy mixed with justice could
propound ;
All prompt with eager pity to fulfil
The full extent of their Creator's will.
But when the stern conditions were declared,
A mournful whisper through the host was heard,
And the whole hierarchy with heads hung down
Submissively declined the ponderous proffered
crown.
Then, not till then, the eternal Son from high
Rose in the strength of all the Deity ;
Stood forth to accept the terms, and underwent
A weight which all the frame of heaven had bent,
Nor he himself could bear, but as omnipotent.
The Hind and the Panther, ii, 499-514.

The change in music first began in Italy, where on the threshold of the seventeenth century some musicians tried to revive what they thought was the ancient Greek manner of declaiming poetry to music.* They naturally required only a single line of sound for the singing-voice, supported by the slightest harmony in the accompanying instruments. Their work at once made rhythm simple ; because it was their desire to deliver poetry to an audience, rather than build up vast

* See my essay, *The Origin of Opera.*

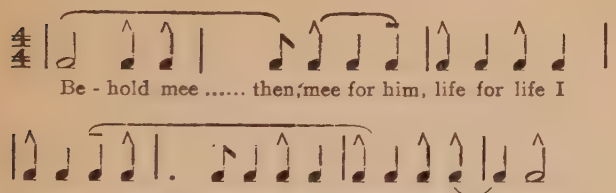
Gothic intricacies of sound : consequently their music fell into the regular metrical beat, and with that simple regular beat came inevitably a simpler regularization of the succession of chords or harmonies.

All the world was ready for the change, as has been said ; and so all kinds of music followed suit, until the way was open for opera, oratorio, organ music, violin music, music for concerted instruments, music for the forerunners of the piano, and solo song. Plural-melody remained, as it always will remain, counterpoint being inseparable from the highest musical art ; yet monody, and the outgrowths of monody, affected plural-melody, and it became more simple and direct of rhythm, depending upon and enforcing in the modern way the regular beat of the measure.

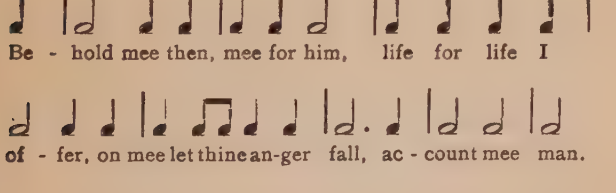
The student, when entering upon special lines of observation in music and the history of music, should first of all try to understand the rhythmical principles of the work before him. Rhythm is as the grammatical and syntactical structure of language ; we learn a new language chiefly by learning its grammatical forms.

And so the student, when concentrating on the change from Mediæval music to modern music, will find it most helpful to realize such fundamental facts as the following. The Mediævalist, Byrd or Palestrina, if setting in the syllable-to-a-beat manner the above passage from Milton, would produce powerful disturbances of the

metrical accent; that is, he would employ Syncopation as complex as the movement of Gothic architecture. Thus:



On the other hand, the modernist would move syllables backward and forward, so that the emphatic syllables shall come on the accented parts of the simple metre:



II. PURCELL

When shadows lengthen, and the gloaming falls,
The star of eve shines forth with purest ray :
So, at the close of that long, splendid day
Which Tallis heralded, amid the calls
Of England, stirred within her island walls
To duties manifold, didst thou arise,
Prophetic Master, whose great page forestalls
Their work that follow, and their skill defies. . . .

JOSEPH BENNETT, To Purcell (1891).

. . . Whene'er his harmony arrests the ear,
We lose all thought of what, or how, or where !
Like love it warms, like beauty can controul,
And while we hear, the body turns to soul ! . . .

" R. G.," on the death of the late Mr. Purcell (1702).

While my young cheek retains its healthful hues,
And I have many friends who hold me dear,
Linley ! methinks, I would not often hear
Such melodies as thine, lest I should lose
All memory of the wrongs and sore distress
For which my miserable brethren weep !

But should uncomforted misfortunes steep
My daily bread in tears and bitterness ;
And if at death's dread moment I should lie
With no beloved face at my bedside,
To fix the last glance of my closing eye,
Methinks such strains, breathed by my angel-guide,
Would make me pass the cup of anguish by,
Mix with the blest, nor know that I had died !

COLERIDGE.—Lines to W. Linley, Esq., while he sang a song to Purcell's music (1797).

II. PURCELL

I

Musical ability, and the practice of the art in the finest and newest manner then known, were around Purcell from the start of his musical life.

His father held honourable positions, being the master of the Westminster Abbey choir-boys, copyist to the Abbey (an important post, because so much music had been destroyed during the Commonwealth), and one of the King's musicians. But he died in 1664, when Henry Purcell was only six years old.

Henry's uncle, a lay vicar of the Abbey, and another of the King's musicians, took charge of the boy, placing him at once in the choir of the Chapel Royal. Here the future master was first in the hands of Captain Cooke, of whom you may read a fair amount in Pepys, and then in the hands of Pelham Humphrey, a young musician of great interest to older students of English music, of whom also you may read in Pepys (the diarist did not particularly care for Pelham, who was certainly rather superior, and perhaps a trifle over-dandified, after his studies—at the King's expense—in France). Both Cooke and Pelham Humphrey died, and the boy then came under the influence of Dr. Blow—a solid musician, very different from Humphrey, but like Humphrey an interesting figure.

The six-year-old boy went thus early into the

choir because of the scarcity of boy singers. There had been no singing by choirs in churches during the Commonwealth, and so no boys had been trained in the art. Matthew Locke said, that " for above a year after the opening of His Majesty's Chappell the orderers of the Musick there were necessitated to supply the superior parts [that is, the treble] of their Musick with cornets and men's feigned [falsetto] voices, there being not one lad for all that time capable of singing his part readily." King Charles came back in 1660. It was in 1682 that Henry joined the choir. Already the band of violins was playing in the Chapel Royal which the King had imported from France, and Purcell from the very beginning was consequently brought into direct practical association with the kind of instrumental music which had recently appeared in Europe.

He was given the post of Abbey copyist when only eighteen years old, and when twenty-two was made Abbey organist. He remained in this second post as long as he lived, which was for another fifteen years, doubling it (from 1682) with the organistship of the Chapel Royal.

Before he was fifteen Purcell wrote some of the Church music that we still use. By the time he was eighteen he was writing music for the theatres ; and his work in this direction increased so that he had to give up his office of Abbey copyist in 1688.

He was a very hard-working man, every hour

filled with productive labour, as composer, performer, teacher, and director of all kinds of productions, from great coronation and other royal services to operas in the theatre. Yet, like Bach, he had time to study carefully, and make manuscript copies of, the music of other men ; and he was probably one of those artists who are readily accessible to their companions in art.

Purcell's inner life must have been supremely happy : he was certainly loved for the sweetness and amiability of his nature.

II

When no more than seventeen years of age, he became well-known as a writer of music that was more movingly beautiful than any other written at the time. A composition of his had beauty and pathos because it was derived directly from the poetry of its subject. His fine mind and sensitive spirit felt the poetry—that is, the imaginative human substance—of the "idea," and thus he discovered the natural Music inherent in the idea. Composers before him were largely content to build artificial sounds around a text ; they caught and embodied the general mood, of course, but they did not strive to catch the exact individual mood, or to reflect the passing, local aspects of the Poesy of the idea. Consequently their music is without the very warm humanity

of the music of Purcell and those who followed him.

Writing in 1690, he called music *the exaltation of poetry*, which is what several musicians of the eighteenth and nineteenth century called it. He says :

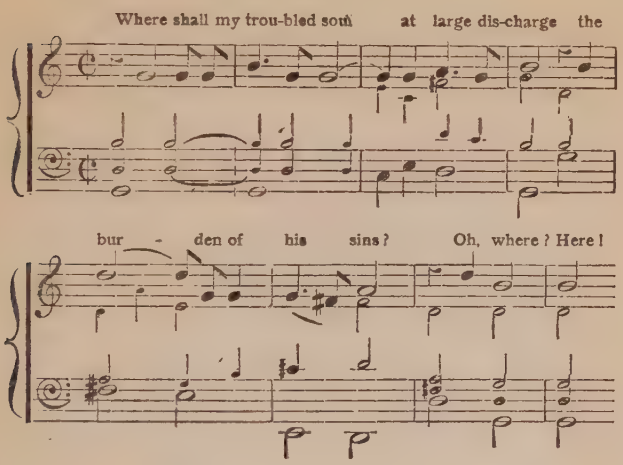
> Both of them (*i.e.*, *poetry and music*) may excel apart, but surely they are most excellent when they are joined, because nothing is then wanting to either of their proportions ; for thus they appear like wit and beauty in the same person.

Expressing the natural poetry of his idea or subject, Henry Purcell expressed likewise the natural rhythmical movement and formal cadency of the text : his musical rhythms and patterns become more immediately direct than those of the preceding epoch, and he stands as the first of modern composers. Allowing for the special nature of musical time, and for the decorative treatment required, we can say that he elevates speech into song, and therefore that his music sings itself according to the principles of our music of to-day.*

Of course, Purcell did not *invent* this manner of writing music : it was already abroad, and one of the men under whose influence he passed as a

* The earlier music likewise sings itself, but to other principles than our modern principles.

child had developed the manner so far as to produce music like the following :



Purcell, like Shakespeare, Bach, and Wagner, merely adopted the main tendency of his time, wrought it out to perfection, and established it in permanent forms.

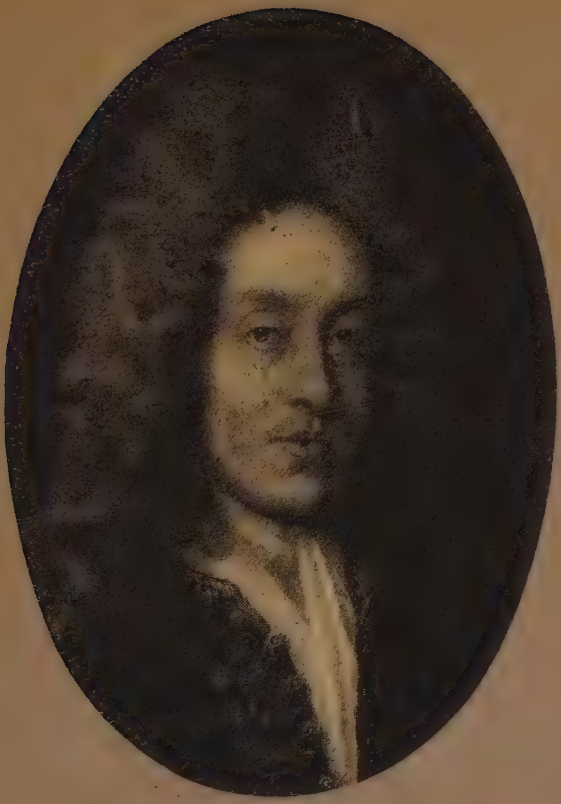
And like Shakespeare and Bach he was a century or more in advance of his time : his music, in respect of harmony, anticipates the nineteenth century ; whereupon Burney, the historian, writing at the end of the eighteenth century, has to point out what (for Burney himself) were unbearable harshnesses and unwarrantable experiments.

His style is a compound of the counterpoint

of the Elizabethan composers, the new declamatory manner of the English musicians of his time (this is illustrated in the above musical quotation), some of the grace and vivacity of the French, and much of the sweetness of the Italians—in particular, of the Italian Alessandro Stradella (1645-1681), Purcell's prime favourite. It was truly a compound, and exquisitely English, with a depth and sincerity of feeling never before known.

By instinct a dramatist, he put nothing into opera or drama which did not grow directly out of the mood and situation. Other composers, of his and later times, wrote beautiful music for its own sake, holding up the movement of the play, and regardless of its dramatic unfitness ; as when Shakespeare, in early plays like "Romeo and Juliet," and poets like Fletcher, sometimes let a character float away into pure poetry that belongs neither to the matter of the moment nor to the person's character speaking the words. In particular, Purcell made the Aria an integral portion of the play, anticipating by a hundred years the great reform of Gluck. [See page 100.]

His arias are consequently as entirely pure song as are the songs of Schubert and Brahms, and as such they are sung to-day at concerts. One of them is the Lament from *Dido and Æneas*, a piece made for the young ladies of Mr. Josias Priest's Boarding School for young ladies in Chelsea, which was composed (as some historians



PURCELL

believe) before Purcell was twenty* : he taught music in this school, and it is said he sang the alto music at the performance. Another great and well-known aria is " Ye twice ten thousand deities," from *The Indian Queen.*

Among Purcell's works are about seventy anthems ; half-a-dozen church services ; more than two score hymns ; operas and plays with incidental music, of which the titles number more than fifty ; nearly thirty odes, welcome songs, and other official works produced by him as Court musician ; a vast number of lighter catches, duets, and trios, some of very convivial substance ; some harpsichord pieces ; and chamber music in the form of sonatas and fantasias.

One of the sonatas is called *The Golden Sonata.* This should be known to all students of music. It is written for two violins, bass, and harpsichord, and was published by Purcell's wife in 1697 ; but it plays well on the piano, and makes a good pianola piece.

Amateur musicians ought to play Purcell's chamber compositions, wherever they band themselves into private quartets of violins, 'cello, and pianoforte. The composer modestly named them " imitations of the most famed Italian masters," and considered he was " bold and daring " to make the attempt ; but they are as

*By close research and minute reasoning, later students have discovered that this opera was written when Purcell was thirty or thirty-one.

original, and as characteristically English as Bach's music is original and Protestant German. It should be borne in mind, when playing them, that Purcell belonged to the generation preceding that of Bach and Handel—not in order that any primitiveness should be condoned, but in order that the absolute maturity of the music may be the more understood and admired.

Several works are now available in modern editions, and there is in England a Purcell Society which is issuing at intervals a complete publication of his works.

III

Many essays and books dealing with music tell a story of Purcell which we may far easier believe false than true, and which indeed has been proved false on all kinds of evidence but that of written record or sworn testimony.

The story is that Purcell was a tavern-haunter, who used to come home in a tipsy state late at night. His wife, to teach him a lesson, had the house locked up one bitter cold night, and the composer, heated with wine, had to stay out-of-doors until she chose to let him in ; thereby taking a chill which, developing, killed him.

Now first of all, the amount of work done by musicians like Purcell, Bach, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, and others of the same order, proves

that they live not only steady lives, but lives of the utmost concentration. It would take most of us longer than ten years to learn the music written by such a man in any ten years of his creative life. Intemperance may stimulate certain types of mind, but not the type which creates highly complex music : no man ever planned a cathedral or designed the counterpoint of a Gothic roof while drunk, or after being drunk ; nor did any man ever write a great choral fugue or construct a symphony.

Secondly, we know that Purcell himself was of a consumptive tendency ; his son said that for some time before he died, Henry Purcell got thinner and thinner—worn out, one imagines, as much by the intensity of his mind as by this lingering disease.

Thirdly, the winter of 1695-6 was very severe, and it was Purcell's duty to attend each day the services in Westminster Abbey—then a place with no artificial means of heating : his devotion to duty probably hastened his death.

Fourthly, the contemporary accounts of Purcell imply that he was the exact opposite of a wastrel ; he seems to have been as respected for wise conduct of life and for reliability of manner as Byrd a hundred years before him :—

. . . Nor were his beauties to his art confined ;
His form appeared the product of his mind.
A conquering sweetness in his visage dwelt,

His eyes would warm, his wit like lightning melt.
Pride was the sole aversion of his eye,
Himself as humble as his art was high.
Ah ! let him, Heaven, in life so much adored,
Be now as universally deplored !

Calm rest thy ashes ; but thy nobler name
Shall soar aloft and last as long as fame.

IV

So far as public performance is concerned, this musician has been comparatively neglected for two hundred years. Apart from church music and some songs, none of his works has run uninterruptedly through generations of performance.

The reasons for the neglect are various. One is the great change that came over England in the first half of the eighteenth century, when German kings settled here, and the music of Handel and some Italians agreed best with the people. Another is the comparative strangeness of his instrumental music, which quality made it seem old-fashioned in the richly romantic nineteenth century. A third reason is the curiously complete English character of his music, which made it peculiar in native ears. Purcell is as English as Shakespeare or Wordsworth. A fourth reason is the entirely Drydenesque nature of many of his

texts : Dryden, and the perversions of Shakespeare used in Dryden's time, became unwelcome to us in the nineteenth century.

Studious professional musicians, however, and a few gifted amateurs, have always kept the memory of Purcell green ; and these have seen to it that some little portion of his works should be heard. A Purcell Club existed from 1836 to 1863 : the members met once a year for a dinner, and once a year for a morning service in Westminster Abbey and an evening concert on the same day. Vincent Novello published all the church music of the composer he could find, between 1829 and 1832. The Purcell Society mentioned on page 42 was founded in 1876.

The bicentenary of Purcell's birth was celebrated in 1858 by the Club. Among the works performed were the cantata *Cupid, the slyest rogue alive*, some songs, choruses, and anthems. The bicentenary of his death was celebrated in 1895 by a performance on November 20th of *Dido and Æneas* at the Lyceum Theatre (Miss Agnes Nicholls sang the part of Dido, and Stanford conducted) ; by a service in Westminster Abbey on the 21st of the *Te Deum* and seven anthems ; by a concert of the Philharmonic Society on the 21st made up of Purcell's music, including the *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day ;* and by a performance at the Albert Hall of a work of Parry's entitled *Invocation to Music*, which has been written in honour of Purcell.

The 1895 celebration did not apparently extend to the provincial towns of Great Britain ; nor did musicians on the Continent apparently observe the occasion. Tchaikovsky, Dvorak, Wagner, and other composers, filled the mind in those days, to the exclusion of interest in an ancient Briton.

The anthems at Westminster on November 21st, 1895, were given with additional orchestral accompaniments. This interference with the originals was not approved of. At the Philharmonic Society's concert the *Golden Sonata* (originally planned for performance as chamber music) was given in the extraordinary condition of an arrangement for two pianos and orchestra. Thus the Purcell enthusiasts in 1895 joined hands with those poets and musicians who in Purcell's time altered Shakespeare.

In the February of 1920, the Cambridge University Musical Society gave six stage performances of *The Fairy Queen*. This opera was performed (on the concert platform) by the Sheffield University Musical Society, on March 17th, 1917.

III. HANDEL

. . . back from to-day
And to-day's music-manufacture—Brahms,
Wagner, Dvorak, Liszt—to where (trumpets, shawms,
Show yourselves joyful!) Handel reigns—supreme?
By no means! Buononcini's work is theme
For fit laudation of the impartial few:
(We stand in England, mind you!) Fashion too
Favours Geminiani—of those choice
Concertos: nor there wants a certain voice
Raised in thy favour likewise, famed Pepusch,
Dear to our great-grandfathers! In a bush
Of Doctor's wig, they prized thee timing beats
While Greenway trilled "Alexis." . . .

BROWNING.—Parleyings, "Charles Avison" (iv) (1887).

Sublimest Genius in a vicious age
Of mean intrigue and persecution's art,
By those devised who knew thee one apart
From fawning slaves, and all their jealous rage
To drive thee from our England did engage:
The mocking laughter of the world pursues
Thy baffled foes across the historic page.
But, O great Master of the choral Muse,
What full reward is thine as stillness falls
On reverent crowds who hear thy lofty strain,
While god-like harmonies the earth disdain,
And, 'mid the cloud-peaks, each to other calls
With thundrous "Hallelujah," that full fain
Would break upon the Throne in Heaven's high halls!

JOSEPH BENNETT (1891).

III. HANDEL

I

THREE countries went to the making of Handel—Saxon Germany, Italy, and England. Italy more or less dominated the whole of musical Europe in the eighteenth century ; kings, the aristocracy and the cultured cosmopolitan art-lovers in all places preferred music of the Italian type to any other, and so it was the country of Italy that, in the beginning, chiefly influenced Handel.

But his music was not Italian. At root it was German—the firm German of his epoch ; yet we are inclined to believe that, in the end, it is well-nigh as representatively English as the music of Purcell, who in his day responded more to Italian influences than to any other of foreign origin.

Therefore the greater our knowledge of the manners of those three countries in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the finer our power is likely to be of understanding Handel's art.

We must remember, when looking at this composer from the historical standpoint, that he worked for thirty years to please the higher social levels of life. Bach, although connected for some time with Court music, worked from the beginning mainly to please the general religious levels of life : he was, one might say, never for the aristocracy, but for the democracy ; yet to-day Handel is almost exclusively the musician of the lower social levels—chiefly, of course, by

reason of the great popularity of his oratorio, *The Messiah*.

Unique among the masters of music, he was a man of business. He came here to make a position, which means to win fame and to secure fortune in the respect that fortune is money. Many popular composers, as Verdi, have kept the same object in view, and like Handel have produced goods for an approved market ; but this man is the only member of the body of true masters who has acted so.

He made the mistake of clinging too long to Italian opera and the aristocratic public for whom Italian opera existed. Realizing the mistake, he cast about for another public, and for a type of subject suitable for that public.

The aristocracy removed, only the bulk of the nation remained. Art, to be popular, must be based on what is familiar. The English public was familiar with Bible narrative and biblical personages. Solomon, Samson, Saul, Joshua, and Moses were as familiar as Richard Lion-Heart or Thomas à Becket. They were as national heroes. Handel therefore took them, and in the beginnings of his old age wrought them into a great form of musical composition, the oratorio.

The great Handel is the Handel of the oratorios. These have never appealed to the Italians, or to the French, as to us in England. For example, *The Messiah* and *Judas Maccabæus* were not heard in Paris until about 1875 ; and *The Messiah* was

not heard in the city between the January of 1875 and the June of 1889. It was the year 1879 that saw the first performance in Italy of *Israel in Egypt*, and *The Messiah* had been heard there for the first time only a little while earlier.

French taste is so different from English that one can understand the long delay in the production in Paris of the oratorios ; and Italian taste is further affected in this direction by the fact that Handel's oratorios represent strongly the Protestant spirit.

Yet when a Roman musician had the courage to present *Israel*, the people were enormously interested : both the musical world and the fashionable world supported him, and the newspapers gave the music high praise. The " gigantic choruses were listened to with profound attention and reverent wonder," some of the " sweet arias " were encored, and the choral fugues were found to be of imposing grandeur. This Roman production of *Israel in Egypt* was repeated immediately several times, and the maestro Mustafà and his society, the Società Musicale Romana, were lauded for an act which was " to mark an epoch in the musical history of Italy."

The works were then nearly a century and a half old.

II

Handel's father, whose name was George, was a man with eyes keen to the main chance : having

learned the profession, art, and trade of surgeon under his master, the Town Barber of Halle, he practised it (or them) until such time as his master died, when he married the well-to-do widow.

George was then early in his twenties. In due course he became surgeon to a royal personage—a member of the reigning family of Saxony, and flourished exceedingly.

At the age of sixty-one he lost his wife ; she died after thirty-nine years of married life with this, her second husband, and George married again. The new Frau George was named Dorothy Taust, and she was thirty-two years old, the daughter of a clergyman, and a good, gentle, loving and lovable woman.

There were four children of this last marriage, two of them girls, the other two (inevitably) boys. Remaining from the first marriage was a son named Carl. One of the boys died as soon as born. The other was George Frederick, destined to be one of the mighty and tumultuous musicians of the world, a man of superb courage, magnificent fighting capacity, unbreakable determination, and almost sublime genius.

Old George wanted young George to be a lawyer, having big ambitions for the family. His own father had been a coppersmith ; he himself a surgeon ; the law was a greater step forward from surgery than the step from the craftsmanship of coppersmith to the science of surgeon. Therefore when it was seen how the little boy had in-

clinations to music, all musical toys were removed from him, and orders went forth that music was not to be heard, heard of, or even thought of, in the presence of the child.

By some means or other George Frederick had gained an elementary knowledge of this forbidden art, the practice of which was so palpable a falling in the social scale, not a rising ; and by further means he contrived to get a little clavichord or spinet into an unused room right under the roof ; this would be a very small instrument, so soft of tone as to be inaudible out of the room ; and there the child went at night to practise, when the rest of the family were sound asleep.

It would be cold in the winter, and almost for certain it would always be dark ; there was the warm bed waiting, and there were the bogeys of darkness to fear : but the boy wanted music more than freedom from cold or apprehension ; and by the time he was seven he could play the clavier.

One day, when the surgeon was turned seventy, a summons came for him to attend upon the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels, who lived near-by. Music was thought a good deal of in that court ; and George Frederick, hearing of the visit his father was to pay, asked to be taken. As fathers will, the old man said no.

Off started the heavy coach, and after it ran the boy ; until a momentary halt happened to be called, and the tail-end of the procession was seen by the head-end. It was too far from home to

make George Frederick return, and so his father put him into the coach, spoke to him severely (more in sorrow than in anger, we may hope), and took him to the Duke's.

The boy wandered about, and tried some instruments—as the story goes, among them an organ. The Duke heard the playing, asked who the performer might be, and then told the surgeon that the boy must be allowed to live for music. The Duke was a music-lover, and the fact that he was a Duke was enough to change the old man's opinions : there was an argument, of course, but when George and George Frederick started back to Halle it was settled that music was to claim his life, not law.

Handel began to study under Friedrich Zachau (1663-1712), an organist in Halle. He also worked well at general subjects, and made fine progress in whatever he touched. Master and pupil were fond of each other, and Zachau truly formed the young boy's mind, so that all matters brought before it later in life found there a place into which they could enter.

Almost immediately George Frederick began to assist in the music of the church. He started composing works for the service when nine years old, and for three years he produced something new every week. Later in life he said, " I used to write like a devil in those days " ; but he wrote thus always, except that at times it was more like an angel.

In 1696 Handel was sent to Berlin to study. There he won fame, and was soon a *protégé* of the Elector, a friend of Attilio Ariosti, and a rival of Giovanni Buononcini (Bononcini), two Italian musicians connected with the Court. At first Buononcini tried to trip George Frederick up in music ; but the boy turned the tables on him, and then he was let alone.

Ariosti (1660-1740) was an opera composer. He had a warm and friendly nature, free of jealousy (because not doubtful of his merits), and he helped young Handel to knowledge of things much as Zachau had helped him, only further, of course, being a man of wider culture and more extensive experience.

Bononcini (1660 - *c.* 1750) was also an opera composer. His nature was not warm and free but narrow and rather spiteful. The chief trap he laid for Handel was to write a harpsichord piece of extreme difficulty, and to set this before the boy to play right off, quite expecting him to break down at the hard places, and so be ridiculed by the royal company. But Handel went through the piece at sight without a slip, playing as beautifully as if he had given it the most careful preparatory study : and emerging victorious out of the trial, he became more happily and securely placed than ever in the Electoral Court.

Both Ariosti and Bononcini went to London some years later, where they had fame and popu-

larity with their operas until Handel came and ousted them.

The contest between Handel and Bononcini was bitter ; it became a social matter, one portion of London society supporting one musician, and the other portion supporting the other. Handel won, and Bononcini was ruined ; some rogue swindled him out of his money ; he was detected in passing another composer's music off as his own, which helped his disgrace (Handel likewise was a robber in this manner, but was not found out) ; and Bononcini, leaving London, wandered from place to place until at the age of ninety he was still writing for a theatre in Vienna : it is not known when he died.

III

George Frederick went back to Halle in 1696. The Elector had desired to keep him, and had offered to pay for his musical education in Italy : but such an offer was dangerous ; it meant that ever after Handel would have been tied to the court in the capacity of official musician, which would have been bad for him.

Royal patrons were tyrants ; if their officials in art pleased them, the officials were not allowed to do anything else ; they could even be refused permission to visit other places ; still more seriously, they could be refused permission to

write works for other places, or to write in a manner that did not please their patrons. And if the officials in art displeased the patrons, they were ruined.

The old surgeon died early in 1697. The child continued living with his mother. He studied in the Halle University, and did musical work in the town, filling for a year an important post as church organist.

He was anxious to get to Italy, then the great musical country of Europe, which supplied other countries with good serviceable musicians, both creative and executive. But there was no money ; and so Handel went to Hamburg, a fine centre of opera.

This was in 1703. There he took a place in the theatre orchestra, first as violinist, but lastly as harpsichordist, becoming thereby almost as important in the performances as the modern conductor.

He made friends with Johann Mattheson (1681-1764), an operatic tenor, composer, and writer about music ; Mattheson taught him a good deal of the business of the stage, and the friendship persisted, despite of jealousy supervening, and despite of a duel between the young men, in which Handel's life was preserved only by Mattheson's sword breaking on one of Handel's buttons.

Four operas were composed by Handel for the theatre at Hamburg. The first of these was

Almira ; in it was a saraband, which the economical composer afterwards used in *Rinaldo* for the air " Lascia ch'io pianga," now one of the household words of music wherever solo singing is practised.

By the year 1706 he had saved enough money to take him to Italy. He left Hamburg, spent Christmas with his mother, and arrived at Florence in January, 1707, moving thence to Rome in April, and for three years alternating between Florence, Naples, Venice and Rome.

In those days an opera composer went from place to place by invitation, much as a singer, instrumentalist, or conductor now goes ; he took with him a new work, or wrote one in the place, superintended the production, and probably remained during the course of the run, which might be one night or thirty nights.

Handel was a brilliant social success in Italy, attending the musical entertainments of the aristocracy, where he both played and provided compositions ; and he was likewise a popular hero. They named him at once *il caro Sassone.*

In Rome he gave some religious works, among these being oratorios. In that city he met Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713) at the house of Cardinal Ottoboni, where Corelli, the founder of modern violin-playing and one of the first writers of pure instrumental music, lived as teacher and master of the famous Cardinal's concerts.* Some of Handel's instrumental music, stronger, more

* See *Makers of Music.*

energetic, and far rougher than the Italian manner, puzzled Corelli : he could not comprehend it, and did not know how to play it, until " the divine Saxon " showed him.

To the other towns Handel gave operas, his second Italian opera, *Agrippina*, running for twenty-seven nights in Venice. . . . Nowadays one successful opera, such as Charpentier's *Louise*, Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, or Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci*, makes a fortune for its composer ; in Handel's time it brought him in the equivalent of a current salary, and while living on the proceeds of one opera the composer had to set about writing and placing another. These older works, however, were slighter than the modern ones ; a busy man, with a good market, would write a hundred operas in a lifetime : Handel could put one together in a fortnight.

Handel's work in Italy completed the first forming of his style. It made his harmonies simple and direct, clarified his instrumentation, and sweetened his melody, so that Italian ease and grace were blended with German strength, warm feeling, and energy.

IV

Returning to Germany, Handel, now in his twenty-fifth year, found good fortune still before him. At the Court of the Elector of Hanover,

he made friends with the Baron Kilmansegge, who was one of Elector George's favourites, and with the Abbate Agostino Steffani (1655-1730).

Steffani was an Italian musician, dignitary of the Church, diplomatist, and Privy Councillor: his particular office in the Hanoverian Court was that of capellmeister, or leader of the royal orchestra and master of the royal music.

The Elector (he was afterwards King George I of England) settled a pension of twelve hundred crowns on Handel, which Handel would not accept until it was quite clear that the gift did not bind him to the Court. And then, in 1710, Steffani having resigned, the Elector offered him the vacant post, which also Handel would not accept until it was made clear he should retain entire freedom to travel. Evidently the Elector wanted him strongly, because he agreed to all Handel's terms and permitted him to go to England at the end of his first year of office (1710).

Music in England at the time of Handel's arrival was not in the best state. Purcell's music was still in use. Italian opera had continued here, as everywhere else, from the time of Charles II, but it had not melted into unity with the true English temperament, and remained entirely an exotic.

You can get a fair idea of prevailing conditions from two numbers of "The Spectator," No. 18, March 21st, 1711, and No. 29, April 3rd, wherein

Addison tells the world what he thinks of the matter. The first paper contains the famous remark *That nothing is capable of being well set to Music that is not Nonsense;* the other is mainly a discussion of the difference between the cadential rhythm and "accent" of English and Italian, and a demonstration that Italian music, following the rhythmical movement of the Italian language, cannot be used for English poetry* ; especially in passages of recitative, where song-melody and speech meet on a border-line between the two methods of expression.

It was Handel's mission to bring about agreement between Italian recitative and English sentences, as in the non-lyrical parts of *The Messiah*.

Queen Anne was gracious to the young German ; and as his fame had preceded him, the world of opera-lovers in London demanded an opera. Aaron Hill (1685-1750), a dramatic author connected with Drury Lane and the Haymarket, put together a libretto upon an episode in Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered" ; this was rendered into Italian by Giacomo Rossi ; and Handel set it to music, almost page by page with poor Rossi, who thus wrote in a note to the published work :

* "For this reason the Italian artists cannot agree with our English musicians, in admiring Purcell's compositions and thinking his tunes so wonderfully adapted to his words ; because both nations do not always express the same passions by the same sounds" (i.e., by the same *accents*, or *inflexions*).

> Signor Hendel, the Orpheus of our Age, in setting to music this lay from Parnassus, has scarcely given me time enough to write it, and I have beheld, to my great astonishment, an entire opera harmonized to the last degree of perfection in the short space of a fortnight by this sublime genius. I pray you then, discreet reader, to receive my rapid work and, if it does not merit all your praises, at least do not refuse it your compassion, I would rather say your justice, remembering how short a time I have had to write it.

Addison, in the fifth number of "The Spectator" (March 6th, 1711), ridicules Rossi, and likewise the production of the opera for its lavish staging: he says nothing about "Minheer Hendel's" music, but laughs at the "Thunder and Lightning, Illuminations and Fireworks," and the flights of birds let loose to fly about the house at a certain point in the opera.

Rinaldo was produced on February 24th, 1711. It ran for fifteen nights, and was several times revived.

V

The composer now had to go back to Hanover. He did not want to leave London, and neither did the Queen or the public want him to go; but his office under the Elector could not, it seemed, be

neglected ; and so, with a present in his pocket from Queen Anne, George Frederick left England.

He attended to his Court duties, paid a visit to his mother, who was now more than sixty years old, and blind, received permission to come to this country again ; and in November, 1712, produced the opera *Pastor Fido* in London. Early the next year he produced another opera, *Teseo*.

At this time Handel made some study of the music of Purcell ; and when he was asked to write a *Te Deum* and *Jubilate* for the celebration of the Peace of Utrecht, he brought into his manner of writing some of the breadth, majesty, rhythmical firmness, and spiritual elevation which are qualities in the sacred music of Purcell.

These two pieces were Handel's first English works ; from this moment onward his art was a compound of German, Italian, and English, the final manifestation of its perfect unity being achieved in *The Messiah* (1742), a work of which the subject agreed as much with Handel's nature as with his musical style.

The Utrecht pieces were performed in July, 1713. Queen Anne granted the composer a life pension of two hundred pounds, which made him a well-to-do young man.

The English music-lovers clung to him. He neglected his duty to the Elector and remained here. Then, in 1714, Queen Anne died, and his master became King George in her place. At

first there was an awkward mood between King and Capellmeister ; but this was gradually removed, and Handel was free for the more than forty years of music-making in England which lay before him.

The King confirmed the two hundred pounds pension awarded by Anne ; then he added another pension of the same amount ; and finally made Handel music-master to some young members of the royal family, the payment attached to that office being another two hundred pounds a year. Bach had no such income, nor Mozart or Beethoven ; Schubert never had a hundred pounds, and Wagner was short of money for many years.

The story of that forty years cannot be repeated here. It is one of the most important sections in the history of music, full of deeds and events, successes, failures, friendships and enmities, endless devotion to work, and a readiness to serve the public which (as already remarked) is not found in any other of the supremely great composers.

After a while, and partly for politico-social reasons, Handel was opposed, and he won a victory only at the cost of bankruptcy and ill-health. And then the taste for opera decaying, Handel had to discover a form of music that would please and attract the people ; which proved to be the form of oratorio, in which his genius was greater even than in Italian opera. But the change meant work as laborious and long-sustained as in his early days for the theatre.

Italian opera, of the finest kind in the prevailing pattern, was made by him up to the year 1741, and that mighty order of oratorio which we call Handelian was made by him almost exclusively from 1738 to 1752.

He wrote about forty operas, more than twenty oratorios, eight "serenatas" and odes, a large number of anthems, Tê Deums, and the like, nearly a hundred and fifty miscellaneous vocal works, and an enormous quantity of instrumental music.

VI

Handel differs from other masters in many ways; of these, only one need be directly mentioned: it is that he left no successor in his chosen line, because that line closed with him. Many Handelian oratorios were written by the minor English composers in the hundred years following his death; it seems indeed to have been as regular a thing for an English composer to write an oratorio of this kind as to write Strict Counterpoint: but not one was other than a complete failure, because the peculiar spirit of Handel was not there in the form.

Since the bulk of the music written in the Handelian line has fallen aside, Handel now stands alone; or, as Lord Balfour said nearly forty years ago, *his works form, as it were, a monument, solitary and colossal, raised at the end of some blind*

avenue from which the true path of advance had already branched, and which, stately and splendid though it be, is not the vestibule through which art has passed to the discovery and exploration of new forms of beauty.

This thought is the one to take with you to a performance of Handel ; it embodies the truth of philosophy, and it helps you first to understand correctly, and then from understanding to admire and love, the composer's creations.

Handel's music has received in England more bad performances than the music of any other composer, yet without sinking under the strain. Every church and chapel choir sings some extracts, and every choral society gives *The Messiah* ; and every solo singer learns one or two airs, except those among solo singers who do not pass the commercial ballad.

His music survives a bad performance for three reasons. One is that the singers enjoy it. The other is that the audience know the music, and can translate the bad performance into a good one by power of recollective imagination. The third is a reason best expressed by a quotation from an English author who will be named in a moment : *The things are so well-defined, simple and grand, that the faintest outline of them tells ; (one's) admiration of the old Giant grows and grows : his is the Music for a Great Active People.*

This English author, however, is speaking of the Coronation Anthems ; he did not care

for oratorios — Handel's, or those of anyone else.

But Handel's music should be well performed. It responds to wise and careful treatment, taking on a character unsuspected before a fine interpretative mind works over it—particularly when the oratorio is such a specimen of his art as *Judas Maccabæus*.

It is the fashion to-day to belittle Handel ; but the belittlement is only a fashion, and so does not touch the heart of the matter. Handel is actually a monument, important in its significance, and beautiful in itself.

During the twentieth century, his operas have been revived in Germany and Switzerland ; and by reaction from modern music they have been immoderately praised there.* These works contain many beautiful songs, but they are dead dramatically, and they never pretended to own dramatic life.

*At Göttingen the operas *Rodelinda, Ottone,* and *Giulio Cesare* were performed in 1920, 1921, and 1922 respectively. At Hamburg *Almira* was given in connection with the bicentenary celebration of the founding of opera at Hamburg. In May 1922, there was a four-days Handel Festival at Halle, of which the programme included a chamber concert, an orchestral concert, performances of the oratorios *Semele* and *Susanna,* and a performance of the opera *Orlando Furioso.* In 1906 acting editions were printed in Berlin (by Hans Dutschke) of the operas *Admeto* and *Poro.*

The German revivals of Handel parallel the revivals in France of Monteverde and Rameau, and the revivals in England of the works of Purcell. They are also part of that reaction from the composers of the Beethoven school which marked the twentieth century.

MASTERS OF MUSIC

VII

This man is so familiarly known in a handsome wig that when you first come across the portrait of him without a wig you are startled. Edward Fitzgerald, of "Omar Khayyam" glory, once wrote so chattily to Frederic Tennyson about Handel's wig that the passage ought to be known to all students of this mighty man's personality. The passage is as follows :

> Concerning the bagwigs of composers—Handel's was not a bagwig. Such were Haydn's and Mozart's—much less influential on the character, much less ostentatious in themselves : not towering so high, nor rolling down in following curls so low as to overlay the nature of the brain within. But Handel wore the Sir Godfrey Kneller wig—greatest of wigs, one of which some great General of the day used to take off his head after the fatigue of the battle, and hand over to his valet to have the bullets combed out of it. Such a wig wa a fugue in itself !

Sir John Hawkins (1719-1789), the historian, saw the composer a good deal in the last twenty years of his life, and he describes his appearance then in the following manner :

> He was in person a large-made and very

portly man. His gait, which was ever sauntering, was rather ungraceful, as it had in it somewhat of that rocking motion which distinguishes those whose legs are bowed. His features were finely marked, and the general cast of his countenance placid, bespeaking dignity attempered with benevolence and every quality of the heart that has a tendency to beget confidence and ensure esteem.

Like many other men of powerful mind and impetuous, apparently headlong, capacity for work, this master did not bustle along the street—his gait "was ever sauntering." Such men, when away from their work, strike the world as persons of abounding leisure.

Handel knew Latin ; his Italian was as that of a native ; he spoke English with a German accent, but knew it so well that our poetry moved him probably as much as the German.

Students sometimes think that he falsely accents words when setting English texts ; but the errors are mostly only apparent, and are to be explained either by archaic pronunciation or by certain conventions of musical treatment which prevailed in the seventeenth century and which Handel adopted. His lyrical airs (e.g., "I know that my Redeemer liveth") are perfect examples of English phrasing, as true to the genius of our tongue as to the genius of music itself. But he was always careful to have the advice of English

people when in doubt : in his will is the clause : *I give to Mr. Newburgh Hamilton, of Old Bond Street, who has assisted me in adjusting words for some of my compositions, one hundred pounds.* This may refer to selecting passages, but equally it may refer to determining accent, construction, and meaning.

When speaking in English, Handel did not think in English, but in a manner compounded of all the languages he knew ; as a result, Hawkins tells us, " his conversation was exceedingly entertaining."

Early in middle age he withdrew from social life, making few further friendships. He lived on his income, whatever it might be, and kept out of debt. At one time he lost all his savings ; but out of the financial gain of that vast mass of work in oratorio he saved twenty thousands of pounds, which was the value of his estate at death. Beethoven, who worked as hard as Handel, but who did not study public demand, ran into financial hardship at the end of his life ; so much so that, reduced to want by his last illness, he had to procure " subsist money " on account of a work he was never to complete.

Like Beethoven and Lully, Handel had an uncontrollable bad temper ; and when really annoyed he said things that were as bad as the average eighteenth-century gentleman permitted himself. The generation was not refined, but gross, and Handel was a child of his age.

He was a heavy eater, even for a big man ; and he liked his food. He was supremely honourable, and in all that really matters in the end a truly good man. There was nothing mean about him ; indeed, surveying him with rapid historical glance, he stands out as a figure of ancient majesty. Sam Johnson was not more independent and individual, and in the pre-Revolution period he fought the aristocracy to a successful issue : he and Beethoven in these respects were companions, and each was a hero.

IV. BACH

. . . Dost thou the Urim and the Thummim hold
Priest-like, between the creature and his Lord ;
That Art through thee sweet secrets might unfold,
Interpreting some deep unuttered word ?

What mean these fugues, exulting in their flight,
As interwoven themes in concert hymn ;
Deep calling unto deep, height answering height,
As Cherubim might answer Seraphim . . . ?
ALFRED MOSS (1919).

What fresh and breezy joyousness is here,
What youthful spirit, what rapture of delight,
What scorn of baseness, what contempt of fear !
What power to put all sombre thoughts to flight !
Once more the world is full of old romance,
Once more life's jarring keys are all in tune,
Once more in woodland scenes the fairies dance
And desolate winter turns to glorious June !

Ah ! could man's life to such a tune be set,
Its dull beat changed for these exultant strains,
What room were there for sorrow or regret,
Or who could doubt that God exists and reigns !
The music dies—and I am sad again,
But with a tenderer grief, a sadder pain.
BERTRAM DOBELL, Bach's Second Concerto.

How good is noise ! what's silence but despair
Of making sound match gladness never there ?
Give me some great glad " subject," glorious Bach. . . .
BROWNING (" Charles Avison," xvi).

IV. BACH

The qualities that made Bach had grown for several generations in his family. Intellectual activity and strength, a fine human power, intense enjoyment of all kinds of music, good mastery of its science, and continual practice in performance and composition, are recorded of nearly twenty Bachs before John Sebastian, all of whom lived in the seventeenth century. More important still, vital in the lives of this family were honesty of purpose, plain and sincere religion, and that noble spiritual steadfastness which belonged to Central Germany.

The Bachs grew like an oak or a mighty river, until they culminated in John Sebastian. Although living in different towns, they kept close together, once a year meeting at the house of one of the seniors in a *réunion*, the effects of which were perceptible through the following twelve months, so that they were as a clan, all the members drawing from and contributing to the common fund of its life.

Germany in those years was in a bad state. It had suffered the thirty years' war and the almost worse after-effects of the war ; materially, morally, intellectually, and in the ways of art, the nation was weak, except in the possession of families like the Bach's : those families saved the country, and in the act produced such men as John Sebastian.

They were a full-blooded tribe of men and women ; their households were large in number, and they liked jolly music as well as serious motets

and grave chorals. All the popular songs were known to them, and they enjoyed the dances.

The family was patriarchal : at a time when John Sebastian was well advanced in middle life, the yearly meeting was attended by no less than a hundred and twenty members ; and when old Heinrich Bach of Arnstadt died, in 1692, at the age of seventy-seven, grand-children and great-grand-children to the number of twenty-eight followed him to his grave.

John Sebastian Bach was himself the father of nineteen children, of whom four boys became famous musicians. His last direct male descendant was a musician who died in 1845, in the year of his age eighty-six. With his four sons the distinctive musicianship of this great family ceased, after an existence ranging from before 1600 to nearly 1800.

I

Johann Ambrosius Bach, the father of Sebastian, was born in 1645. His first work in music was that of " Assistant to Town-Musicians," which was naturally a humble sort of work, though leading to something better if the worker had ability and steadiness.

When twenty-two years old, Ambrosius became a Town-Musician in full : he was, moreover, a good organist. When twenty-three, he married

a girl named Elizabeth Lämmerhirt, whose father was a furrier. The married couple settled in the little town of Eisenach, where they remained for the rest of their lives.

Sebastian was the last child of the family. He was born in the spring of 1685. In 1694, the mother died : this was in the year his elder brother, Johann Christoph, married.

Ambrosius married again a few months later ; but in eight weeks he also died. Thus Sebastian, in this tenth year of his life, lost father and mother. There was no money, and he went to live with Johann Christoph.

The brother was organist of a church in Ohrdruf. He was of the quiet type of musician, with no brilliant gifts ; but he taught Sebastian to play the clavichord and to understand the first principles of music.

Johann Christoph was kind-hearted, but unimaginative and so not sympathetic : thus he would not let the boy study a manuscript collection of organ works he had made ; and when Sebastian made a second copy (which he did secretly by moonlight when the others were in bed, spending six months over the task, and ruining his eyesight), Christoph took the new copy away the moment he discovered its existence.

He looked after his young brother for five years. The education to be obtained in Ohrdruf was meagre, consisting only of smatterings of such subjects as theology, rhetoric, arithmetic, Latin

and Greek. But attached to the school was a choir of boy-singers which provided music at local functions, and so Sebastian not only had some experience of music making, but picked up a trifle of money.

When the boy was fifteen, Johann Christoph, now twenty-nine years old, could keep him no longer ; he had boys and girls of his own ; his income was small.

The choirmaster of the Ohrdruf school recommended Sebastian to a larger school in Lüneburg, where the youth went, to work as prefect of the choir. He could not sing so well as formerly, but was a thorough musician, and was able to play organ, violin and clavichord. His salary at the school was between two and three pounds a year, but the authorities fed and boarded him ; and in the library of the Convent to which it was attached lay a rich collection of music that was at his disposal for study.

In Lüneburg lived Georg Böhm (1661-1734), the organist and composer, with whom Bach became closely acquainted, and from whom he received some of the ideas and methods of music which appear in his earliest compositions. At the same time he became acquainted with a little of the French music of the day.

Life here lasted for three years ; and then, at eighteen, Bach went to play violin in a band at Weimar. The band belonged to a nobleman who was fond of Italian music, and so Bach at once had

the range of his horizon widened, adding Italian music to his already acquired German and French. In the same year (1703) he became organist of a church in Arnstadt, a post held by him for four years under easy and friendly conditions, though several times the Municipality had to call him over the coals—in that he played over-florid and disturbing accompaniments to the congregational singing, that he rather dodged the labour of teaching the singing-boys, that he extended a four-weeks' leave of absence to sixteen weeks, without asking permission or notifying the authorities, and that he admitted "a stranger maiden to show herself in the organ-loft, and to make music in the choir."

The long four months' holiday was occupied by a visit to Lübeck, where lived the great North German organist and composer, Dietrich Buxtehude (1639-1707). Bach wanted to spend some time with Buxtehude in order—as he told the authorities at Arnstadt—"to learn thoroughly one or two things connected with his art." The two towns lie two hundred and fifty miles apart, and Bach walked both ways.

During the years in Arnstadt, he was busy composing; and some of his works in this and the next periods of his life are in the brilliant Buxtehudan manner.

No one knows who the "stranger maiden" was; but she was probably his cousin, Maria Barbara, whom he married in 1707, at the age

(quite advanced and mature for the Bachs in this respect) of twenty-two.

II

A little before his marriage Bach became organist of a famous church at Mühlhausen. And as the musician was already famous in that part of Germany, both parties were in good spirits over the arrangment.

The yearly salary attached to the post comprised

85 guilders
3 coombs of corn
2 cords of wood
3 trusses of brushwood
3 pounds of fish.

The authorities granted their new organist the free use of a waggon to convey his furniture from Arnstadt to Mühlhausen : this was additional to the salary, and Sebastian expressly requested it.

The position did not turn out comfortable. The authorities agreed to effect some alterations in the organ asked for by Bach, and they allowed him to enlarge the choir and add to the music in regular use ; but the people of the town were over-selfcentred, and did not like the coming in of an outsider, however clever ; the established musicians were conservative, and objected to Bach's youthful energy ; the clergy interfered with his work : therefore when, within a year, the

office of organist in the Court at Weimar fell vacant, Bach applied for and secured the appointment.

This, the "Weimar Period," lasted from 1708 to 1717.

Interest in music was lofty at the court of Duke Wilhelm Ernst. It was a soberly religious place, yet thoroughly artistic. Bach was both organist of the duke's chapel and master of his secular music, and his wonderful organ playing was fully appreciated: "his feet," they said, "flew over the pedal-board as if they were winged." Italian chamber music was in favour. Sonatas and concertos were constantly played; and Bach wrote here some of his works in the Italian manner or arranged (partly rewriting) Italian compositions for other instruments.* But he did not respond to Italian influences at all in the manner of Handel's response. It was here, likewise, that the majority of the organ works were composed—the greatest, and in some respects the only entirely great, organ music in the world.

A number of cantatas, and many miscellaneous works, belong to the Weimar period.

One of Bach's friends was Johann Gottfried Walther (1684-1748), the town organist and one of the court musicians, a writer of fine organ music, and author of the first *Musical Lexicon* to be compiled. The friends, however, fell out; losing affection for Bach, Walther naturally lost

* See *Makers of Music* (Corelli, Vivaldi, etc.).

belief in his musicianship, and in his dictionary he gave a poor account of him and his work.

At the age of thirty-two, the master ended his work at Weimar and began a six years' period in Coethen (Cöthen), where he held office under Prince Leopold as Kapellmeister ; he had now finished with the duties of an organist, and never again occupied an organist's position.

Being now removed for a time from church work, he occupied himself largely in the writing of instrumental music, and while at Coethen produced the first part of that perfect work, the *Well-tempered Clavier* (1722), which becomes more loved of musicians with each successive year of their lives. The *French Suites* were written here ; also the *Inventions*.

In May, 1720, John Sebastian was away at Carlsbad with the Prince. Happy news came from home all the time he and his family were separated ; but between the arrival of the last communication and the day of return, Maria Barbara was taken ill and died.

There had been seven children of this marriage, two of them, Wilhelm Friedemann (1710-1784), the mathematician and clever musician, next in ability to his father, and Carl Philipp Emanuel (1714-1788), whose work belongs to a school that was to arise to perfection with Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven.

Eighteen months after the death of Maria Barbara, Bach married again. There were twelve

or thirteen children of the second marriage, among them the "English" Bach, Johann Christian (1735-1782), who was famous in England for his life and work here.

The story of Bach's domestic life is grateful; he wrote music for the family to use, and was in all things a loving husband and careful, patient father. Anna Magdalena Wulken, the second wife, was by fifteen years the junior. She was the daughter of a musician, and sang well; but more happily than all she was a good music-copyist, quick and industrious, and became her husband's invaluable helper.

In 1723 the office of cantor in the Thomasschule at Leipzig became vacant, and Bach received the appointment. Here he lived for twenty-seven years, giving five lessons a week to the scholars of the school, directing the music of the church, and producing an incredible number of master-works, which include not only five sets of cantatas for every Sunday and Feast-day of the year, but the *Passions*, the *Christmas Oratorio*, the *Mass in B minor*, the motets and other choral pieces, the *Partitas* and part two of the *Well-tempered Clavier*, and many organ pieces on the Lutheran chorals.

Bach became blind in 1749. On July 18th, 1750, his sight suddenly came back to him; but a few hours later he was struck down by apoplexy, and on the 28th, in the evening, he died.

Anna Magdelena lived for another ten years.

She became poor ; within two years of her husband's death she was receiving official charity and selling her possessions ; some of the children were doing well ; but she died in an almshouse.

III

The music of Bach was not much used for fifty or more years after he died. It was not in the "new" manner, and musicians did not understand it.

From the turn of the century, and especially since the time of the romantic composers—Mendelssohn and Schumann, it has gradually risen in regard, until now all the world esteems it ; and not to understand Bach, or to be moved by his sublimity, is to be musically defective.

The story of this revival reads like a novel, and it is told in many books.

We do not to-day hear Bach's music with the original effects, nor in the proportions of his original intention. What we play on the piano was written for harpsichord or clavier, two very different instruments. His orchestra was not as ours. Even his organ was different, and the modern method of registration is not as the old. Our relative balance of chorus and accompanying orchestra is quite different from that maintained in Bach's time. Thus where a modern band and chorus may be :

(*a*)	139 sopranos	18 violins
	140 contraltos	8 violas
	71 tenors	6 'cellos
	92 basses	6 basses
		2 or 3 oboes, etc. (*as in next table*),

the band and chorus at Leipzig was :

(*b*)	3 sopranos	4 violins
	3 contraltos	4 violas
	3 tenors	2 'cellos
	3 basses	1 bass
		2 or 3 oboes
		1 or 2 bassoons
		3 trumpets
		drums
		flutes.

Table (*b*) gives 2 singers to 3 instruments ; table (*a*) 27 singers to the same 3 instruments. And in table (*a*) the voice-parts are not equal, as in table (*b*). Now in Bach's music all the polyphonic parts have, or may have at any moment, equal individual importance with the others ; which means that all should be of the same available strength. A new grandeur is brought into some portions of the music by these modern proportions, but the essential effects are not those of Bach, and so we do not hear the music as the composer probably wanted it to be heard. Without doubt he would have chosen larger choirs if the opportunity had been his ; yet he

would not have changed 2 against 3 to 27 against 3.*

For nearly a hundred years we have been studying Bach and his music closely, as we have been studying Shakespeare ; the subject is not yet exhausted, or even—it may be—quite correctly understood in several respects.

The reason of this is, that he is one of the great influencing forces of the world : his actions make themselves felt in widely separated directions ; and he, therefore, remains one of those living energies that cannot be finally discussed. Living music is like a living language—something too elusive for an exact and final scientific observation.

Nearly all the primary qualities and purposes in Bach, when looked at individually and in detachment, seem to be the chief subject attending on his art. He seems to be the one master of fugue, or the one absolute innovator of harmonies, or the one Miltonic master of religious epic, the one thorough master of *recitative* song, the one writer of perfect organ music, or the one master

* These remarks are not intended to convey to the young student that we ought to play Bach's works with the forces available for him. Circumstances and conditions alter ; and even when a composer gives specific directions what forces are to be employed, it is not always good to follow them : thus Berlioz, for his *Messe des Morts*, asks for 178 instrumentalists and 210 singers ; but when, in England, this work is given by a body formed of, say, 120 instrumentalists and 350 to 400 choralists, the singers are likely to be less powerful than what is wanted.

of instrumental music in the first period of its development ; because of the completeness of his work in all departments, and because of the vivid character of that work.

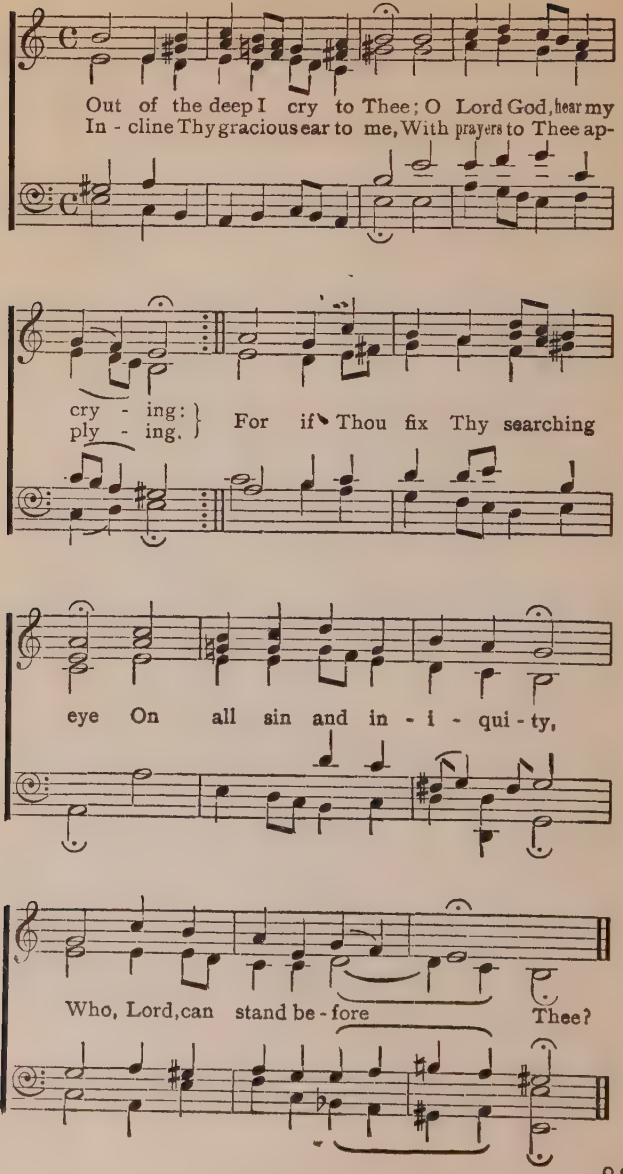
Actually, however, the one chief element in the art of Bach is the musical expression of the spirit of German Protestantism. He is the complement in our art of Martin Luther. In him was the soul, and therefore the mind (freed of controversy and intellectual dogma) of the new religious world. Therefore his religious music is as a sea, into which poured the emotions of millions of earnest folk, as those emotions were experienced and developed through several generations of men and women ; these people had made use of the beautiful Lutheran hymn or choral ; and it is the choral which, when all is considered, proves to be the supreme manifestation in Bach's music of his power to gather material from outside and fuse it into chemical unity with his own inventions.

His religious music is as the voice of all Lutheran Germany wrought into one congregation.

The art of a man like Bach is the sum of all the art in the world around him. It draws together the material used by every kind of smaller artist, whether in the supreme artist's country or any other country, and after selecting what it requires, works it into one homogeneous substance. Bach is representative of all western Europe up to his

AUS TIEFER NOTH.

Melody: 1525. Harmony: J. S. BACH.


Out of the deep I cry to Thee; O Lord God, hear my
In - cline Thy gracious ear to me, With prayers to Thee ap-
cry - ing:
ply - ing.
For if Thou fix Thy searching
eye On all sin and in - i - qui - ty,
Who, Lord, can stand be - fore Thee?

BACH AT THE ORGAN

period ; English, Italian, French, Middle German, North German and South German forms and moods all went into his mind ; but he remains Central German, just as English remains English for all its acceptance of the words and manners of other languages ; Bach *assimilated* those elements, upon which they ceased to be foreign.

Therefore, since the art of Western Europe is, in the end, summed up in Bach, we understand him better when we know about that art, and we understand that art better when we know about Bach.

More than this, however, for the enquiring student, are the records of the process of Bach's assimilation. In the beginning he had to copy those foreign moods and forms. He had to study, and reproduce in original compositions, the manner of Italians, North Germans and South Germans ; these works remain, and by them we can enter into the localities of their rising without leaving Central Germany. If you listen to the D major prelude and fugue for organ, or to the Allabreve in D for organ, you can safely contemplate North Germany and Dietrich Buxtehude while the one piece forms itself before you, and while the other forms itself you can contemplate Italy—chiefly the severe Roman School—and Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1644). Other works in the organ books will summon before you the Viennese composer, Johann Jacob Froberger (c. 1612-1667). The story of this great subject is interesting, and large enough to occupy a lifetime.

V. GLUCK

. . . and Bach,
Old father of Fugues, with his endless fine talk ;
And Gluck, who saw gods ; and the learnèd sweet feeling
Of Handel. . .

LEIGH HUNT, The Fancy Concert (1845).

Vain Artifice, and Sound divorced from Sense,
Thy course opposed with clamour loud and strong ;
But soon Alcestis' sorrow, Iphigénie's wrong,
With his great passion who e'en Hell's defence
By Music's charm brake down, them banished hence .
Such might was in thy pure, expressive song.

JOSEPH BENNETT (1891).

V. GLUCK

In the eighteenth century, poets, dramatists and opera composers drew many of their subjects from Greek mythology. They found that these old stories were easier to handle than contemporary stories, because their very remoteness covered them with an artistic tone, and because they were *conventionally* poetical—readers and audiences knew that the stories were poetical, and knowing this were prepared to respond correctly to the work of the poet, dramatist and musician. Country estates laid out in this century generally had a few imitations of Greek temples dotted about in odd corners or on the crests of rising ground ; and pictures of landscapes nearly always had a building of classical design disposed in its background.

The greater creative artists of the century invested the subjects with living humanity. They departed from convention, and approached originality. Highest among these in the sphere of music stands Gluck, of peasant origin, whose greatest compositions deal with the story of Iphigenia.

I

The first part of Gluck's life runs from the time when, a little boy seven or eight years old, he had to go in winter through the woods with his father, to the time when, at the age of twenty-

two, he was adopted musically by an Italian lover and patron of music, the Count Melzi.

The father was a rough man, yet did his duty by those round him the moment he perceived it. He had been a soldier under Prince Eugéne of Savoy, and then—leaving the army, and marrying —had become gamekeeper on the estate of Prince Kaunitz, in the northern part of Bohemia.

Christopher was three years old when his father began work on the estate : he and his brother Anton soon had to help him, in all times of the year, going for long tramps of inspection, with not too much food, and barefoot, even when snow was on the ground and storms were blowing.

The family was very poor. Life was Spartan-like in every respect ; yet being natively strong and of fine natural courage, the two brothers thrived under it, Christopher especially developing energy, independence and splendid physical health.

After some years here, the family went to Eisenberg, where the father became a servant on the estate of Prince Lobkowitz. Christopher had already shown signs of better intelligence than was usual in his world ; he had also begun to reveal musical ability and had learned to play a little on the violin and the violoncello.

Being now in a more profitable occupation, the father sent Christopher to school at the Jesuit College in the town of Komotau, which was near Eisenberg, and kept him there for six

years ; that is, from the age of twelve to the age of eighteen.

Christopher's course of study was general ; he worked at all the subjects taught by the fathers, and it was not understood that music was to be his profession. But music was among those subjects : the boy continued to practise his two string instruments ; he worked at playing the organ and the harpsichord, sang in the church choir of Saint Ignatius, and probably studied the theory of music.

He was not in any way a prodigy, but a strong, self-reliant, steady, clever sort of youth, who was happy to master whatever was set before him—the kind of pupil teachers welcome.

The six years ended, the father allowed him to go to Prague University. He could send little or no money, but knew from his own life that a man of courage and resource can manage a living anywhere and in any conditions.

Christopher entered as a Beggar Student : he had admission to the classes, and it was understood that a part of his time was to be filled with work for a living. And so during the terms he gave what lessons he could in music, sang and played in the Prague churches, and fiddled generally wherever engagements were to be obtained locally.

In Prague at this time lived Bohuslav Czernohorsky (*c.* 1690-1740), a monk of the order of the Minorities and (from about the time Gluck

was twenty) organist of the church of Saint Jacob. He was a composer—the bulk of his works were lost in a fire—and a good teacher. Gluck and Czernohorsky became acquainted ; the monk took special interest in the " beggar student," gave him lessons in various departments of music, and helped him to professional engagements.

During the vacations, when there was little doing in Prague in the way of music, Christopher went out into the country with his violin. He wandered from village to village, playing at the villagers' merry-makings and weddings, and sleeping under haystacks or in barns when no one had a spare shake-down to offer him. There was no money to be had of these country folk, but only payment in kind, which in this case was for the most part eggs.

You can see Christopher receiving several dozens of eggs of a morning, carrying these along the road until he struck a town where he could sell them, and when hungry eating a few.

He probably enjoyed those long vacations—he who in the fullness of time was to be made a Cavaliere by the Pope and to become the centre of musical interest in Europe. It may be, of course, that in the days of his fame, Gluck had no particular fancy for eggs.

Towards the end of his four years in Prague, the young musician began to give musical entertainments in the surrounding towns. These

GLUCK AND HIS FAMILY

brought him a little money, and the concerts made friends for him who were able to help in various ways.

Then, in 1736, he went to Vienna, presented himself to Prince Lobkowitz, was warmly patronized by the Prince, and by him introduced to the social and artistic world of the city, Vienna being then a second Paris.

The young man was fresh from the country ; yet his musicianship was of notable quality, and almost immediately he was the friend and companion of such established performers, composers and theorists as Johann Joseph Fux (1660-1741), author of the *Gradus ad Parnassum*, which fixed the principles of academic counterpoint, and composer of four hundred and five operas, oratorios, masses, vespers, psalms and sonatas ; Antonio Caldara (1670-1736), among whose works were sixty-six operas—this Italian died the year Gluck went to Vienna ; Giuseppe Porsile, an Italian in the service of the Court at Vienna and writer of operas and oratorios ; and other musicians who were far removed from the peasant singers and dancers Gluck had known, and whose rewards were not calculated in the terms of eggs.

Before long Christopher was taken into the household of an Italian nobleman named Melzi ; he went with his patron into Italy, was helped by him to study and to produce music, and so was removed from anxiety and struggle. This was in 1736.

In 1745 Gluck visited London, where he produced two operas ; in 1754 he went to Vienna, there to work for ten years as director of the Court Opera ; and in 1774 he went to Paris.

At the age of sixty-six the master returned to Vienna :

> Of the Chevalier Gluck, the merit is well-known to all Europe, and his peculiar claims to applause as a dramatic composer have been so fully stated in my *German Tour*, and will again be discussed in the next chapter, that I shall only acquaint my reader here, that after returning to Vienna from Paris, and being disabled from writing by a paralytic stroke in 1784, he only lingered in a helpless state till last autumn, 1787, when he died at the age of seventy-three.

This paragraph is taken from Burney's *A General History of Music*, the fourth volume, page 594 ; and it shows us Christopher Gluck lying for three years bed-rid, more than sixty years from the time when he had tramped barefoot through the winter forest with his father and brother.

The story of the years between Burney's note and the beginning of the kindness of Prince Melzi is one of the most instructive, as it is one of the most important, in the records of European music.

GLUCK

II

In Italy, Gluck studied for four years under Giuseppe Sammartini, a composer some ten years older than himself—a careless, fiery individual, restlessly animated, but a genius who, in a longer observation than the present, has to be discussed as one of the chief forerunners of Haydn in chamber music and symphony.

The four years ended, Gluck got work to do for the theatres, and in the years 1741-4, he provided two operas for Venice, three for Milan, one for Cremona and one for Turin.

The phrase "got work to do for the theatres" expresses the matter exactly: in those days a musician was asked to write an operatic piece for a particular theatre just as to-day he may be asked to provide the incidental music for a melodrama or a Shakespearian revival, and when his piece had been offered for the entertainment of the patrons of the theatre, it was put aside, both management and composer more or less forgetting it—unless it had been particularly successful: there was no lofty idealism about the business, and no impassionate ardour; all that went to the making of the opera was a cool, journeyman-like efficiency, and a composer seemed able to supply as many operas as there were orders available. There was no question of printing the music, the scores lay about the theatre; no one minded if they were lost; when Gluck heard that

his three Milan works had been destroyed in a fire he probably gave the news hardly a second thought.

Drama as well as opera was thus regarded ; the plays were made for local entertainment, not for the glory of art, in Italy and Germany as in France and England. The custom was an old one ; and we might actually have lost several of the plays of Shakespeare, had not the First Folio been printed so soon after the poet's death.

The operas Gluck made in London in 1745 were of the Italian type. Handel thought little of them (as little as did the composer thirty years after), and remarked that the composer knew no more counterpoint than his—the speaker's—cook.

One of the London operas, the *Artamene*, which had been the Cremona opera of 1743, ran for ten nights. Its arias became popular, especially the one entitled *Rasserena il mesto ciglio*. As we shall see at the end of this chapter, Gluck sang this song to Burney in Vienna, nearly thirty years after. He told the Englishman then that it was in London he first clearly received the ideas of reformed opera which were to condition the work of his last period.

The character of this reform was intimated in the chapter on Purcell, at page 40. It was, in brief, to have no beauty in the music that did not grow out of the drama, and to have no artistic decoration that did not aid the telling of the story and the intensifying of its effects. The debased

Italian opera was only a collection of arias. In between the arias the dramatic business was carried on perfunctorily, by means of *recitative* (or song-speech), which the actors did not trouble much about and which the audience did not trouble about at all.* There was "lyric emotion" in the arias, but that emotion did not grow inevitably out of the drama, and it did not clarify the drama. That is to say, the songs were æsthetically false.

Take Beaumont and Fletcher's "The Maid's Tragedy"; observe the character or psychology of Lysippus, and then read the passage of lovely poetry, commencing:

> But this lady
> Walks discontented, with her watery eyes
> Bent on the earth. . . .
>
> (*Act I*)

You will perceive that the poetry is rather out of place, and that it is entirely false in the mouth of Lysippus. This passage is as an aria of the debased Italian opera.

Shakespeare, in his later plays, used lyrically emotional poetry, but only in the closest connection with the dramatic action, so that both the drama and the poetry were endowed with additional vigour, and the personality of the character uttering the poetry was made clearer. There is poetry of this kind in "Macbeth," and it is as integral a part of the play as are the lines of

* See *Makers of Music*, Chapter XXV.

action accompanying the murder or the ghost scene.

All the arias in the reformed operas of Gluck are as the poetry in Shakespeare's final tragedies.*

Gluck explained his theory in critical language :

> When I undertook to compose music for *Alceste*, I proposed to abolish entirely those abuses introduced by the ill-judging vanity of singers, or by the extreme complaisance of the masters, which have so long disfigured the Italian opera, and rendered it, not the most splendid and dignified of entertainments, but the most ridiculous and tiresome. My purpose was to confine music to the true office of ministering to the expressions of the poetry and the situations of the plot, without interrupting the action or chilling it by needless ornamentation. I thought that music should do what brilliant colour and skilful light and shade effect for a correct, well-designed drawing—animating the figures without distorting their outline. . . . I have striven to banish the abuses against which reason and good sense have long protested in vain. . . . I thought that my most strenuous efforts must be directed in search of a noble simplicity, thus avoiding

* A phrase from one of the great arias is given on page 110 of *Favourite Musical Performers*.

a parade of difficulty at the expense of clearness. . . .

The stories of his five great operas were taken from the Greek mythology. The first to embody his new principles was *Orpheus*. Then came *Alceste*, *Iphigenia in Aulis*, *Armida*, and lastly the crown of all, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, the first hearing of which affects your whole subsequent musical life, whatever may have been your preceding knowledge or the richness of your artistic experience.

Some of these works were produced in Paris. They made a great stir. The city divided into two camps, and the opposition brought in the Italian composer, Nicola Piccini (1728-1800) to oppose Gluck. The Gluckists completely overthrew the Piccinists, their final weapon being the *Iphigenia in Tauris*.

When the student turns to a special course of reading about Gluck, or to an observation of his music, it will be enough for him to attend to a few of the following operas.

(*a*) First Period, while the composer followed the Italian tradition :

La Semiramide rinconosciuta	1748, Vienna
La Clemenza di Tito . .	1752, Naples
L'Innocenza gratificata . .	1755, Vienna
Telemacco . .	1765, Vienna

(*b*) Middle Period, wherein the composer reformed his ideas and gradually matured them ;

Paride ed Elena	-	1770, Vienna
Orphée et Eurydice (Orpheus)	-	1762, Vienna 1774, Paris
Alceste	-	1767, Vienna 1776, Paris

(*c*) Last Period :

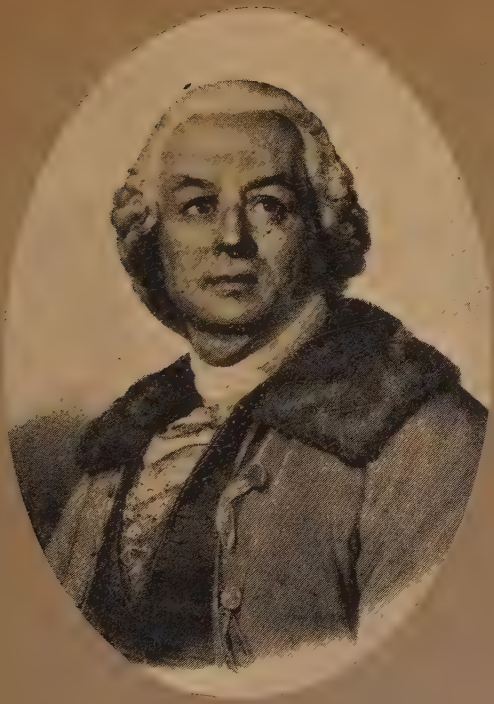
Iphigénie in Aulide	-	1774, Paris
Armide	-	1777, Paris
Iphigénie en Tauride	-	1779, Paris

Gluck wrote fifty-four operas in all—not a vast number, as operas went in those days, when minor musicians often put together a hundred or a hundred and fifty. (Piccini wrote a hundred and thirty-three.) These fifty-four operas were his chief works, apart from the operas being only some odes for solo voice, some pieces of chamber music (concertos, trios, symphonies) and a cantata.

He was a curiously indolent man, and astonishingly careless. He would not take the pains of an ordinary copyist, even in writing out his best works ; and was likely to make mistakes in his instrumentation which can be ascribed only to carelessness and laziness combined.

III

The visit paid by Burney to Gluck in Vienna (page 100) is told by him in a manner that affords a rare picture of a master of music at home in the



GLUCK

prime of his maturity. The book containing the story is the work named "The Present State of Music in Germany, the Netherlands, and United Provinces; or, the Journal of a Tour through those Countries, undertaken to collect Materials for a general History of Music." Few of the readers of the present book are likely to have access to that volume; and so Burney's narrative can be copied here, in slighted shortened form:

"At five o'clock lord Stormont's coach carried madame Thun, his lordship, and myself, to the house of the chevalier Gluck, in the Fauxbourg St. Mark. He is very well housed there; has a pretty garden, and a great number of neat and elegantly furnished rooms. He has no children; madame Gluck, and his niece, who lives with him, came to receive us at the door, as well as the veteran composer himself." [Recollect that this is in 1772, when Gluck had yet to write his last three operas: Burney was now forty-six years old, and Gluck fifty-eight.] "He is much pitted with the small-pox, and very coarse in figure and look, but was soon got into good humour; and he talked, sung, and played, madame Thun observed, more than ever she knew him at any one time.

"He began, upon a very bad harpsichord, by accompanying his niece, who is but thirteen years old, in two of the capital scenes of his own famous opera of *Alceste*. She has a powerful and well-

toned voice, and sung with infinite taste, feeling, expression, and even execution. . . .

"I was assured that mademoiselle Gluck had learned to sing but two years. . . . She began singing under her uncle, but he, in a precipitate fit of despair, had given her up; when Signor Millico, arriving at Vienna about the same time, and discovering that she had an improvable voice, and a docile disposition, begged he might be allowed to teach her for a few months only in order to try whether it would not be worth her while still to persevere in her musical studies, notwithstanding the late decision against her; which he suspected had its rise from the impatience and impetuosity of the uncle, more than the want of genius in the niece. Her performance now is an equal proof of the sagacity and penetration of Signor Millico, in making this discovery, and of the excellent method with which he conveys his instructions. . . .

"When she had done, her uncle was prevailed upon to sing himself; and, with as little voice as possible, he contrived to entertain, and even delight the company, in a very high degree; for, with the richness of accompaniment, the energy and vehemence of his manner in the *Allegros*, and his judicious expression in the slow movements, he so well compensated for the want of voice that it was a defect which was soon entirely forgotten.

"He was so good-humoured as to perform

almost the whole of his opera of *Alceste* ; many admirable things in a still later opera of his, called *Paride ed Elena* ; and in a French opera, from Racine's *Iphigenie*, which he had just completed. This last, though he had not as yet committed a note of it to paper " [Burney is in error here], " was so well digested in his head, and his retention is so wonderful, that he sung it nearly from the beginning to the end, with as much readiness as if he had had a fair score before him. . . .

" I reminded M. Gluck of his air, *Rosserena il Mesto Ciglio*, which was in such great favour in England, so long ago as the year 1745 ; and prevailed upon him, not only to sing that, but several others of his first and most favourite airs. . . .

" While the chevalier Gluck was singing, count Brühl, a great *dilettante*, joined the company; he is a son of the famous Saxon minister, and plays in a very masterly manner upon several instruments.

" From hence I was carried by lord Stormont to general Valmoden's. . . ."

Gluck's will is a peculiar document. The third clause takes some explaining, if it be not accepted as proof of peasant economy extending beyond the grave. The second clause represents a careful calculation of cost and value received, moreover.

As nothing is more certain than death, or more

uncertain than the time of it, I, the undersigned, being in full possession of my faculties, thus give my last instructions.

1. *I commend my soul to the infinite mercy of God, and my body to be interred according to the rites of the Holy Catholic Church.*

2. *I bequeath the sum of 25 florins for 50 masses for my soul.*

3. *I bequeath to the Poor-House, 1 florin; to the General Hospital, 1 florin; to the Burgher Hospital, 1 florin; to the Normal School, 1 florin: 4 florins in all.*

4. *Further, I bequeath to each of my domestics still in my service at the time of my death one year's wages.*

5. *I leave it entirely to the will and pleasure of my heir general to give anything to my brothers and sisters.*

6. . . . . *I hereby appoint my dear wife, M. Anna von Gluck,* née *Bergin, as my sole and exclusive heir; and that no doubts shall arise as to whether the silver and other personal property be mine or my wife's, I hereby also declare all the silver and other valuables to be the sole property of my wife's and consequently not included in my previous bequests.*

Should, however, this my last will and testament not prove valid, I hope that it may be considered legal as a codicil.

Lastly, I appoint my highly-esteemed cousin, Joseph von Holbein, Royal Hofrath, executor to

this my will, and I bequeath to him a snuff-box as a remembrance.

Signed and witnessed.

Christoph von Gluck.

The man who began life as a barefooted peasant boy ended well-to-do in worldly goods. He had the house in Vienna, and another in the country not far out. In each he played the gentleman finely. His dress was fashionable. On festival days he wore an embroidered coat. Towards servants and strangers he held himself haughtily. Yet this pride was largely a matter of the dignity he felt to appertain to his art and to his position in his art, because he still remained a jolly companion among friends, and after a meal joked with them to the full.

His last composition was a cantata on the subject of the Last Judgment, which Salieri finished after Gluck's death. A story is told in connection with the cantata which has a complete measure of the pathetic. The end of the world is announced by drums and trumpets, and the people (voiced by the chorus) wildly express fear, despair, and remorse. Into the climax of this terrible moment enters the calm, gentle voice of the Saviour, the mass of the agitated music falling aside. His voice is heard through a sweet melody, the invention of which long troubled the old man. He was discussing the matter with Salieri, and asked him how Christ should be brought in. Salieri could not answer. "Ah well," said Gluck,

" In a few days I will go and ascertain for myself."

The close of Gluck's life was slightly obscured by the brilliant work of Mozart, and the later magnificence of Beethoven for a time confirmed this. But his great operas have never been totally neglected ; they enter constantly into large operatic schemes, and at any moment one of them may be available in performance for the young music-lover.

VI. HAYDN

'Twas he who sang Endymion that said,
" Lo ! Haydn is a child, and none can know
Where next his artless fancy may outflow. . . ."

Laus Deo ! *thou didst write on finished page,*
Ascribing thus the glory of thy skill ;
So sings unweariedly each babbling rill
To its Creator, who in long-gone age
Devised such charmèd beauty to assuage
The fever of the world, and give it fill
Of subtle influences which should still
Disturbèd longings and impatient rage.
O Fount of Music, that, with artless art,
Flows on through bosky shade and sunlight gleam,
I ask no richer blessing than, apart
From madding strife, to drink of thy pure stream,
And cry Laus Deo ! *with a thankful heart :*
Nor would I wake if this it is to dream.

JOSEPH BENNETT (1891).

VI. HAYDN

THERE is a curious condition attending the life of Haydn. It is so curious as to be well-nigh unique, because by it his life and work are split into sections that might belong almost to different men.

The cause is not the long life and steady intellectual growth of the composer. He certainly lived to be seventy-seven, and he was of the musicians who develop, being of the kind represented by Handel, Bach, Beethoven, and Wagner. Nor was the cause the changing circumstances of his work, which went from those of a nobleman's private music-maker to those of a public musician in a totally different country.

What so exceptionally affected the work of Haydn was the life and the art of that other composer with whom his name is always mentioned—Mozart.

When Mozart was born, Haydn was already twenty-four years old. By the time Mozart was fully at work, Haydn was nearly fifty ; and he lived for eighteen years after the passing of his superior. Haydn therefore was the predecessor, contemporary, and, in some degree, the successor of Mozart : he grew while Mozart grew, and the works of his which we best know were written after Mozart's death.

The first Haydn belongs to the pre-Mozartean eighteenth century. The second Haydn, while not belonging to the Revolutionary Europe of Beethoven, belonged to that wider eighteenth

century wherein the bands of aristocratic exclusiveness and reserve were relaxed, and literature, art, and music became more bold, free, and generous.

This one man saw the passing of the old world of Bach and the final establishment of the new world of Beethoven ; he saw the work of Gluck and of Mozart ; and he was the opener-up of the path to the new world, into which he himself entered very far.

To understand Haydn thoroughly, therefore, the young music-lover will have to spend some time in studying the eighteenth century and its transition into the nineteenth.

The second Haydn is the *Papa Haydn* of familiar musical talk and writing. To refer all Haydn's work to the man lovingly so named is as absurd as to speak of " old Bach," much of whose work was done early in life. . . . This, by the bye, is an important matter. An incorrect appellation proves the speaker without a true idea of the subject. If Old Bach wrote the first book of the *Well-tempered Clavier*, then Old Mendelssohn wrote *Elijah* and Old Weber *Euryanthe*, because each was thirty-seven years old when his respective work was written ; and if Old Bach wrote even the *Matthew Passion*, it was Old Verdi who wrote *Rigoletto*. There is often a delightful reason for the use of a term like " old " ; it betokens affection or an easy friendly regard : but you must not let it evoke a false picture in

your mind. Was Bach old at thirty-seven? Emphatically no. And is a man old at forty-four, the age of the men who made the *Matthew Passion* and *Rigoletto?* Again no; not even in the eyes of the readers of this book, if they take but the right range of observation.

There is, indeed, no age of mind: Verdi was younger when he wrote *Falstaff* at eighty than many a man of seventeen or eighteen; and Haydn was as a lovable child when, in his sixty-sixth year, he fancied and created that oratorio of *The Creation*.

I

The father, grandfather, and some of the uncles of Joseph Haydn were wheelwrights: others were servants. The family were thus of the social order from which comes the masters of music, since only Weber came of a (once) aristocratic line, and only Mendelssohn of wealthy people.

Joseph was the second of twelve children, of whom the sixth was Michael, a musician good enough to be known in history without the help of his brother's fame. Mathias, the father, carried on his business in an Austrian village named Rohrau: this is in Lower Austria, on the Hungarian boundary. The Haydns were of Croatian descent, and so were not Teutons, but rather Slavs.

Joseph, when only a few years old, began to sing the peasant songs he heard round him. He sang with such sweetness of tone and expression, and his time was so true, that the parents realized he was musically gifted ; but father Haydn had hard work to persuade mother Haydn to let the child enter the beginnings of a musical life. She, like her husband, was an orderly, industrious, and very clean person ; and out of the ambition she had for the children, wanted Joseph to be something safe and respectable—a priest, or a schoolmaster. However, she gave way, and Joseph, at the age of five or six, went to live and study at the house of a distant relative, named Johann Mathias Frankh.

Frankh was a good schoolmaster and a fair musician. He helped the boy to learn the violin and clavier and improved his singing, so that (as the composer himself said late in life) he could stand up like a man at the age of six and sing masses in the church choir.

But Frankh was a strict man, who doled out more floggings than food. He was also untidy : under his neglect Joseph got dirty, and being by nature immaculately clean, became miserable, so that he longed for his mother and the regular, familiar pleasantness of home. (The mother died in 1754, at the age of fifty-one).

A young Viennese organist named Georg Reutter, visiting the town where Frankh lived, heard the child sing, and at once engaged him

for his church choir. This was in 1740, Joseph being eight.

The church in Vienna was St. Stephen's, but the choir sang once in a while in the Imperial Chapel. The children were understood to be instructed in general subjects and in music; yet Reutter was a man lacking in sense of duty, and did not trouble to make the instruction systematic or thorough. Haydn says he remembers having only one or two lessons in theory from this master of his; nevertheless, he experimented with composition, filling every piece of paper he could get hold of—Reutter, in the meantime, sneering at him when he happened to come across his childish attempts.

At last, when Joseph was sixteen, his voice broke. He was now no use to Reutter, but indeed a nuisance; so the man (now Court Capellmeister) got rid of him as soon as he could manage, after suggesting to the boy a means of livelihood, as horrible as the suggestion was callous. This J. A. C. Georg von Reutter is one of the few men in musical history whom it is permitted to despise. (The *von* entered his name in 1740, he being made a noble in that year.)

The youth, Franz Josef, was compelled to keep himself. He could not go back home, nor could the family help him. Hunger was ever present, for he was still growing. Clothes wore out; and a person wanted a shelter. Moreover, this

particular person wanted to study music, to learn all there was to know, and to make music.

A few friends appeared. A member of another church choir gave him a home for a little while—Joseph was, of course, absolutely stranded ; other music-lovers got him a few pupils ; and at last a kind-hearted individual lent him a few pounds with which he rented a room at the top of a big house which was attached to the College of St. Barnabas. Here he had a decayed old clavier, plenty of fresh air, leisure for study, and scope to enlarge his teaching connection.

Haydn made good little by little. He had pupils who belonged to the higher social world, and he made the acquaintance of some eminent musicians, among them Gluck. He became accompanist to a famous teacher named Porpora, who in return for Haydn's help as accompanist and servant, taught him his method of instruction.

Living in the same house, but lower down and in larger rooms, was the famous poet and writer of opera librettos, Metastasio. This man lived in Vienna from 1730 to his death in 1782. He had known kindness in his own life. His patron in Vienna was a Spanish nobleman. Haydn pleased him; he taught him Italian, and was the means of introducing him as teacher into a great Spanish family. Metastasio was fifty years old when he extended these kindnesses to Franz Josef.

Having carefully studied the new forms of

composition adopted by Bach's son, Carl Philip Emanuel, Haydn wrote music in the same style, gradually evolving the symphony which was to be perfected first by Mozart, then by Haydn himself after Mozart, and finally by Beethoven ; we call Haydn the " Father of the Symphony."

In 1752, an actor commissioned him to write some music for a play ; in 1755 he remained for a while in the house of a well-to-do man who had parties of musicians to stay with him, and who maintained a sort of private orchestra (Haydn wrote his first symphony here, along with a number of other works) ; and by 1756, he found he was apparently out of his troubles, being now twenty-four years old, and already quite widely-known as a creative musician. His pupils increased in number and in social significance ; he secured a valuable post in the household of a nobleman, the salary attached to this being nothing less than twenty pounds a year, with board, and perhaps some sort of a uniform or livery : and then—when twenty-eight—he married, lost his post because of his marriage, and began forty years of as wretched a married life as you may wish to hear of.

His wife was extravagant, cold, bad-tempered, rigid in her ideas and opinions, and jealous from the beginning, even before there was cause for jealousy. Haydn's letters contain many remarks about his wife ; he seems to have been gentle enough, patient, and not without generosity.

However, married he was, and married he remained until nearly seventy.

II

In 1761 Joseph Haydn took service with the great family of the Esterhazy. He had three of the princes for master, the second being the famous Nicolaus, known as the Magnificent.

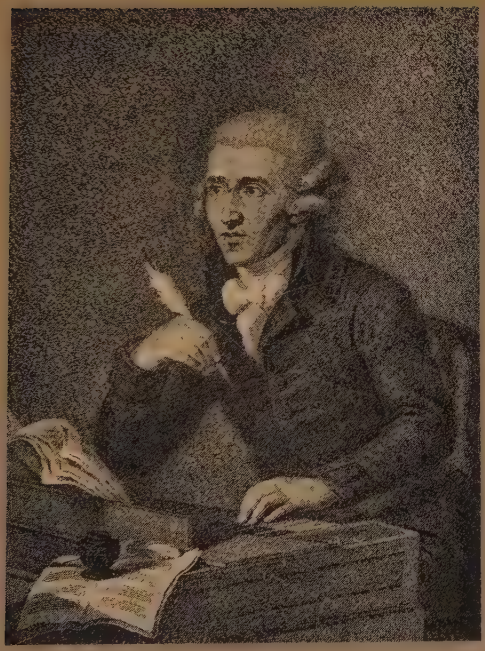
Haydn retained this service to the end of his life, which came forty-eight years later ; though after Nicolaus died (1790), the set duties gradually became more and more nominal only.

The post for a long while was worth about eighty pounds a year. The Esterhazy's were millionaires. But when Prince Nicolaus died, he left his beloved music-director a pension of a hundred pounds a year ; and at the end of Haydn's life his yearly income from the Esterhazy's amounted to two hundred pounds.

Very quickly the composer became famous throughout Europe, and his music was played in all the western countries.

As time went on, the musicians in England tried to induce him to visit London ; and at last he did so, first in 1791, and then again in 1794 : these visits are important events in musical history.

Toward the end of his life he and the people around him drew more and more closely together



HAYDN

in high affectionate regard, until he became truly *Papa Haydn.*

A year before his death, namely on March 27th, 1808, he was carried in a chair to a performance of his oratorio, *The Creation.* The performance of the music was more than he could bear ; his emotion increased until in the interval it was considered best to take him back home, and as his chair was carried through the hall the great musicians and noblemen of Vienna came to him, making their affectionate farewell. Beethoven was among them : he kissed the old man's hand, and then kissed his forehead. At the door of the hall Haydn made his bearers halt ; he turned round in the chair, and made a gesture as if blessing a great crowd of friends in the moment of a final separation. Call this to mind, when reading of the death of Schubert and of the last moods of Berlioz.

Haydn was not seen in public again. The kiss pressed on his forehead by Beethoven was his farewell salutation from the great world.

A few years later, Beethoven kissed another musician in public, this time with a kiss of welcome, the musician being a little boy whose name and personality were to fill the nineteenth century as Haydn's had the eighteenth. These two musicians, he of the eighteenth century and he of the nineteenth, are those in whom certain pure qualities of sincerity and sympathy were developed in supreme degree : the two were linked by

Beethoven's kisses, and those kisses are a symbol in the minds of all later musicians who try to live the true life of art, which is the life in, by, and for it.

III

Life at Esterhazy was often as full and brilliant as at Versailles before the Revolution ; as a fact, the place was likened to Versailles by visitors, and it was one of the most famous of the princely establishments in Europe.

The palace contained an opera-house large enough to seat four hundred persons ; there were a marionette theatre, and a private music room. During the Prince's occupation, whether short or long, opera or drama was enacted every day, and concerts took place most evenings.

Haydn was master of the music ; in detail, and in the mass, his work must have been enormous. Yet through it all he wrote music so easily that in twenty-five years he produced nearly two hundred large instrumental works (symphonies, divertimentos—the divertimento was a suite of movements,—quartets, trios, concertos, sonatas) ; several large choral works, among them five masses ; a number of operas and operettas in the conventional Italian manner ; cantatas ; songs ; and a multitude of smaller compositions. Many a good musician might have done little more in the time than copy the

works and take the rehearsals, and yet rested satisfied with the record. Haydn carried through his work in a manner that won and retained not only the artistic pride and devotion of his band, but also their personal love : there is no more enviable gift than that of being able to do a great amount of work yourself without upsetting your assistants or dissatisfying your employers.

The man must have been supremely calm in a palace. What carried him through so perfectly was first his ability, and secondly the knowledge he and all around him had of that ability. And not only did the members of the band love him, but his Prince was highly proud of him.

The duties of the head of the Prince's music, that is of the Capellmeister, were to provide two definite concerts and two operatic performances a week, and the daily music. The character and extent of the latter is shown by notes made on the scores which record the places in which the pieces were used. Thus on one score is *in horto*, on another *ad prandiem*, on a third *in refectorio*, on a fourth and fifth *in Regens-choriatu* and *post coenam*, telling us that the music has been played in the garden, at breakfast, in the dining-hall, in the chamber of the choirmaster, and after dinner. Music evidently attended upon a Hungarian nobleman of the eighteenth century as it attends us to-day in hotels and restaurants.

Naturally the music could not be loud or rough,

being but a decorative accompaniment to social activity ; nor could it be large and grand in the manner of modern symphonic music : Tchaikowski's *Pathetic Symphony* would have been an annoyance. Much of Haydn's early music employs only eight strings, oboes, and horns ; and the symphonies are planned to last only about a quarter of an hour, because it was the custom to give several of them in succession.

These works, and the piano sonatas of the same order, are now no longer in use ; yet they might be pleasantly revived by little bands of amateurs, and it is good for the piano student to spend occasional hours with the sonatas—the majority of which can be played at sight by a pianist able to perform such a work as Beethoven's second piano sonata or the easier *études* of Chopin.

We are sometimes told that those thirty years of service in the house of a prince were bad for his art, making of his music a mere entertainment for the aristocracy, and reducing the composer to the mental condition of a lackey.

The idea is not good. Haydn certainly had to provide " occasional " music at times ; but he was a true critic of his work—he did not think highly of all he composed, and it happens that the things he did approve of are just those which the rest of the world in later times has found good. He was the exact opposite of a lackey : princes and emperors were gracious to him, offering a measure of friendship ; but he knew the different

nature of his greatness and theirs, and would not allow them to obtrude themselves upon his own individual life. Haydn was more serenely dignified and reserved with the mighty of the earth than with the humble.

His official position on the contrary aided the growth of his powers. He was free of anxiety. There was no need to waste energy in teaching or in the drudgery of public performance. At his command was a fine orchestra upon which he could test experiments as conveniently as if the band were a harpsichord or organ.

Certainly there were moments when he felt over-secluded. Italy called to him with a voice often provokingly insistent.

Yet he was content with the wide fame that was his well before the age of forty-five ; he admired the high culture of the Prince ; and he was far more securely circumstanced than any other great musician in the whole course of history, except perhaps Palestrina. Haydn himself remarked to a friend :

> The Prince was satisfied with all my doings. I met with encouragement at every turn. As chief of the orchestra I was able to try experiments, to observe what strengthened effect and what weakened it : thus I could risk any alteration. I was set apart from the world. Nobody was near to perplex me with doubts or to shake my self-confidence. I could not help becoming original.

As time went on, however, Haydn got a little weary of his duties in the house of Prince Esterhazy. He began to feel confined. Home life was more unpleasant than ever ; his wife's extravagance continued, and she took to intercepting his letters to Frau von Genzinger, being jealous of that warm friend of her husband's. Perhaps the free movement of Mozart and the younger composer's increasing public popularity made him want to live the freer life.

He was certainly restless towards the end of his thirty years' service, because about four months before Prince Nicholas Joseph died, he wrote in the following manner to Frau von Genzinger :

> Often as my prince absents himself from Estoras [when, of course, the personal supervision of the music by Haydn would not be wanted] I never can obtain leave, even for twenty-four hours, to go to Vienna. This is hardly credible ; yet the refusal is worded in such polite terms that it is quite impossible for me to urge my request. Well ! as God pleases ; and I trust that you may not be displeased with your Haydn.

IV

The death of Prince Nicholas freed Haydn. He was retained in office by the new prince, but

the engagement was not nearly so strict, and the composer was able now to make those two famous visits to England.

In another letter to Frau von Genzinger, written this time from London, he says :

> How sweet is some measure of liberty ! I had a prince all kindness ; but at times I was obliged to be dependent on base souls. I sighed for release, and now in some degree I have it. I am fully aware of the benefit, even though my mind be burdened with further work ; and the consciousness of no longer being a bond-servant sweetens my toil.

The cause of his burden of further work was this. He had been engaged to come to London by Johann Peter Salomon (1745-1815), who was a giver of concerts in the city. The expenses of the engagement were a serious matter for Salomon, and he had even more serious anxiety from the opposition of a society of musicians who were running concerts to clash with his. This society brought over Ignaz Joseph Pleyel (1757-1831) as a counter-attraction, hoping to draw the audiences away from Salomon and Haydn.

Pleyel had studied under Haydn from 1771 to 1776, and the master was fond of his former pupil. There was no bad feeling between them. They dined together. " We will share the laurels fairly," wrote Haydn, " and we shall each go

back home satisfied." He said further, "Pleyel on his arrival showed such modesty towards me that he gained my goodwill afresh. His presumption is everywhere criticised; yet I love him, and have gone to all his concerts and been the first to applaud him."

But despite this friendliness between the two men, each had his duty; and when Pleyel announced a new work for each concert, Haydn had to do the same:

> So, in order to keep my promise, and to help poor Salomon, I must be a victim and work unceasingly. I feel it, however, very much. My eyes suffer, and my nights are sleepless; but by God's aid I will overcome all.

The works made with such effort and pressure were those famous symphonies that are called the *London* or the *Salomon*. They are among his greatest compositions. Nothing of Pleyel's is now in use.

The story of Haydn and Pleyel and the London concerts of 1791-1792, shows us Haydn's character in the best light.* He was, indeed, generous

* (*a*) "It will be a happy thing for music, should Pleyel when the times arives) replace Haydn for us." Thus Mozart wrote to his father in 1784; meaning that Pleyel could worthily succeed Haydn when the older musician died.

(*b*) "My wife wrote to me that Mozart very much depreciates me; but this I will never believe. If true, I yet forgive him."—Haydn to Frau von Genzinger, in a letter from London.

to other good musicians in the way Liszt and Schumann were generous, and very kindly. More than this, he had the widest view of the responsibilities and rewards of the great creative artist.

Let us hear him speak, now at the age of seventy :

> Often when contending with all the kinds of hindrances that were opposed to my works—often when the powers of both mind and body failed, and I felt it hard to persevere in the course upon which I had entered, within me a secret feeling said : *Here below are but few happy and contented men ; and care and grief prevail everywhere : perhaps one day your labours may be the source whence the man overladen with cares, or the weary and worn, may derive a little rest and refreshment.* Oh, what a powerful inducement to press onward !

In these words is the *credo* of the religion of the great workers in art.

Joseph Haydn was a strong-bodied man, not quite of the average height : the cut of his coat made him look a little top-heavy. His jaw was massive, and his bottom lip protruded in an ugly manner, so that his mouth was not the best of his features ; it was, perhaps, rather repulsive,

except when he smiled. There was, moreover, a swelling in the lower portion of his nose, due to a growth of the polypus kind ; and he was marked by smallpox. His forehead was magnificent, though never seen because of the low wig he wore. His eyes were beautiful.

People said he never laughed out loud. His manner was dignified, and his expression in repose austere ; yet he was gentle, liked a witty turn in conversation, and became irritable only when his kindness and generosity were abused. He had a benevolent nature : " Anyone may see it in my face," he said, " that I am well-disposed to all the world."

Haydn was fond of children ; he used to carry bits of tasty food and sweetmeats in his pocket to give the little ones he met when out walking.

He was modestly-minded about his musical genius, honouring it as a special gift from God ; and he respected its working so curiously that when a finer mood of inspiration than usual came upon him he used to dress in his court clothes and make use of his handsomest snuff-box, during the hours of composition.

Haydn was, in music, young and cheerful even to extreme age ; and when (inspired by hearing Handel's music) he set about writing an oratorio, he selected the youngest and freshest of all possible subjects in the Creation. This work was produced in 1798, a year after Haydn had made that " Emperor's Hymn " which became the

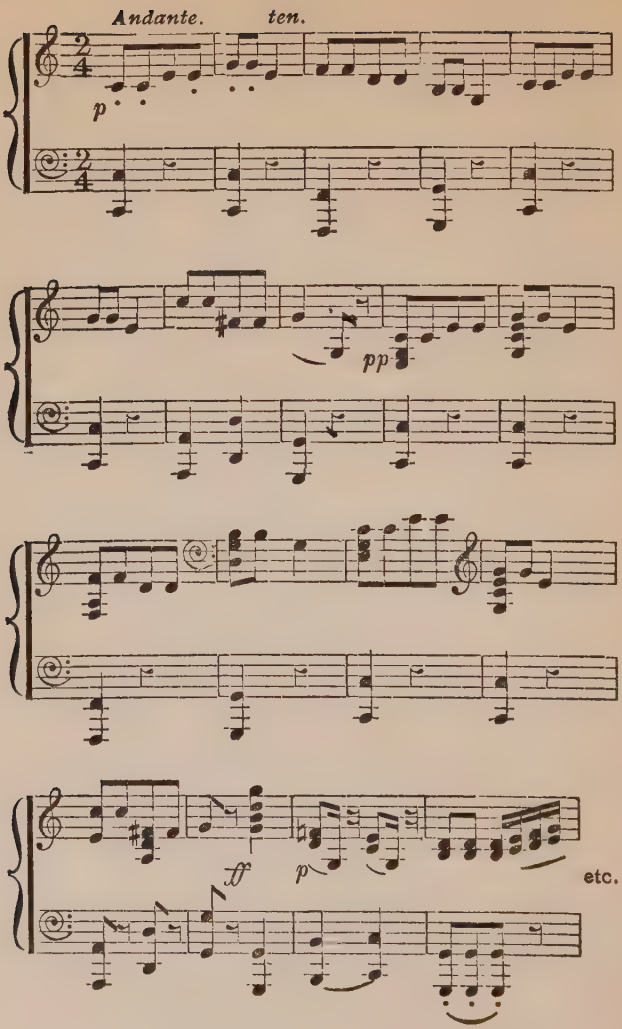
national anthem of Austria, and which we sing in religious services here, whatever our denomination.

His personality is in his music. His peasant origin remains there, apparent in the use made of native tunes and rhythms, and in those he invented of the same native kind, in the tone of healthy cheerfulness and unaffected liveliness that marks the majority of his compositions, and in their delightful quality of robustness.

Haydn's liveliness sometimes becomes very sprightly : he said once, " when writing music, one is seized by a waggishness that will not be subdued," and so he wrote down things like that startling chord in the slow movement of the *Surprise Symphony*, which even to-day startles a listener at the first hearing.

Because he was facetious in music, people who wanted to run him down called him a mere jester (just as to-day the same kind of people call George Bernard Shaw a clown, because he is facetious at times when writing of art, sociology, economics and philosophy). Before Beethoven, the average man and woman did not understand the comic element in instrumental music ; and even to-day you will find some one to look disgusted at you if you laugh aloud in the concert-room during the performance of Dukas' *L'Apprenti Sorcier*, or of the witty pieces by men like Eugéne Goossens and Arthur Bliss.

Haydn lightened music ; he took it as a


Andante.
ten.
p
pp
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p
etc.

man might have taken literature from Milton to Laurence Sterne, yet keeping it all the while as purely within the domain of fine art as Bach and Handel.

Music needed him and his personality. The new kinds that were beginning to stir in the great days of Bach were crude, unstable, and restricted. Haydn gathered the new elements together, proved that perfect music could be formed of them, and by his creations became the father of modern instrumental music.

VII. MOZART

. . . Such an attempt required an inspiration
Of a peculiar sort—a consummation;
Which, had I felt, these scribblings might have been
Verses from which the soul would never wean:
But many days have passed since last my heart
Was warm'd luxuriously by divine Mozart. . . .

KEATS.—Epistle to Charles Cowden Clarke (1816).

I could write as good verses now as ever I did, if I were perfectly free from vexations, and were in the ad libitum *hearing of fine music, which has a sensible effect, in harmonizing my thoughts, and in animating and, as it were, lubricating my inventive faculty. . . .*

Some music is above me; most music is beneath me. I like Beethoven and Mozart—or else some of the aerial compositions of the elder Italians, as Palestrina and Carissimi. And I love Purcell. . . . Good music never tires me, nor sends me to sleep. I feel physically refreshed and strengthened by it, as Milton says he did. COLERIDGE.—Table-Talk (July 6th, 1833).

O Mozart, Prince of sound! freely you gave
A wealth of happiness—for a pauper's grave.
But, that the race of men should now atone,
Old Time your unknown grave has raised into a throne.

EVA MARY GREW (1924).

VII. MOZART

I

Mozart was born into music, as he was born with it uniquely active in his nature. In his home he was companioned by several fine characters. There was love there—to him from mother and from sister, from him to them in the warmest degree : Mozart's love for these two is one of the stimulating passages in the personal history of artists, so real was it, and so charged with vitality.

His life should have been happy without modification, amid serene surroundings, and restful in the close ; but the fates arranged otherwise, except that, for his art, they gave him perpetually moods of an otherwise unknown happiness.

Leopold, the father, was a violin player, teacher of the violin, and composer, who held several important offices. He was born in 1719, and died four years earlier than his son.

Anna Maria, the mother, was a woman worthy the love Wolfgang poured upon her. She was very handsome : indeed, she and her husband were notable for good looks.

Maria Anna, Wolfgang's sister, was the elder by five years. She was a clever pianist, and travelled Europe with her brother and father. Her life lasted until 1829. At the age of thirty-three she married a Baron von Berchthold zu Sonnenberg. His death left her in the need to take up music teaching again ; and even this she

had to relinquish when, at the age of nearly seventy, her sight failed her.

The girl whom Mozart was to marry was Constance Weber, an older cousin of Carl von Weber. Constance was a good musician, singing well and playing the piano pleasantly. She and her husband were happy, and she looked after him well, for all that she was a hopelessly bad manager. For a long time after Mozart's death, Constance and the two children had a hard time ; she had to work bravely at teaching and concert-giving to find the means to keep them together ; but in 1809 she married again, attaining at last a safe and quiet life.

When Constance died, in 1842, fifty-one years later than Mozart, her first husband must have been a remote, mysterious memory. . . . This present year of writing is 1924. If it were the year of Constance's death, Mozart would have been dead since 1873, Beethoven since 1909. We should be acquainted with Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*. Berlioz would be known to us for a mad sort of Frenchman. Mendelssohn, Chopin, Schumann, and Liszt would be at the height of their young fame ; and Sims Reeves would still be singing as an English baritone.

Mozart—like Elizabethan poets who died young and great commanders whose existence did not cover forty years—had a long life, because his life's work began at once, and because at the age of fifteen he was a master in all matters of

music except those that come of, and depend upon, matured experience.

In a period when travelling was difficult, he played in a dozen courts before he was ten—German, French, English, and Italian. At a time when musicians were jealous of one another, he won, and was allowed to have won, great successes before he was sixteen. At the age of five, he was an expert performer, and a composer before he knew how to write sounds on paper. For thirty years he lived a life of fullness and vigour, creating art the world has never relinquished or permitted to be obscured even for a moment, whether by Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Wagner, or Richard Strauss.

And so, since

> We live in deeds, not years, in thoughts, not breaths,
> In feelings, not in figures on a dial,

Mozart's life was, in the vital essentials of life, a long one.

Would he have done greater work in a life like Verdi's or Wagner's, which extended the one to eighty years and the other to seventy? Would he have grown, as Beethoven grew, so that the last work was as far beyond the first as "The Tempest" is beyond "The Comedy of Errors"?

You may answer yes and no. If his world had not changed, Mozart, you may consider, would not have radically altered. If the world had changed, as it did after 1789, Mozart might

have altered as thoroughly as Handel when Handel turned from Italian opera to English oratorio. A life as long as Verdi's would have caused Mozart to encompass Beethoven as Haydn encompassed Mozart ; but in the varied, impassioned, and introspectively poetical world of Berlioz, Schumann, and Chopin, Mozart would have been—it is more than likely—a stranger, as was Samuel Rogers in the world of Browning and Tennyson. He would, perhaps, as a creator, have lagged superfluous on the stage.

But the facts are, that he died at thirty-five, having achieved as much as ever falls to the lot of a human being, and that soon after his death a new order of thought and feeling arose which, for its contemporary expression, required and evolved a different kind of music.

II

Wolfgang was the most wonderful child-musician ever known to the world. His playing was a miracle. Therefore Leopold Mozart began to travel with his two children as early as 1762. First he went from Salzburg, their home-town, to Munich, where the Elector was gracious ; and then to Vienna, where the Emperor and Empress were still more gracious, and the fashionable world became wild with wonder over the two children—chiefly over the little boy, now six years old.

There was no money, except what was earned by the way.

In June, 1763, they left for Paris, arriving there in November after a series of equally remarkable public appearances in towns *en route*. Life in Paris was successful, in the way of the life in Vienna.

France was left in April of the following year for London. Life in England was successful, in the way of the life in Vienna and Paris.

England was left in July (or September), 1765, for Holland. Now the children fell ill, and there was a long interruption: Leopold had already had *his* illness in England.

Eventually the troupe reached home, some time in the year 1766, and the performers were at rest —except for Wolfgang's studies and composing: works of his had been published in Paris and London, and he had written several Symphonies in the manner of the day, an oratorio, and many other works. Being now ten years old, he was on the threshold of adult life.

Maria Anna was called *Nannerl*, and Wolfgang *Wolferl*, in home circles, these being the diminutives or pet names. He was a beautiful child, so sweet, gentle, and obedient that they say he never had to be punished for anything, not though parents in those days spoiled the rod rather than the child.

Scientists in foreign lands had been as interested in Wolfgang as kings and queens. One of the

profitable side-shows of the exhibition had been a sort of private display, admission two-and-six, where you could see the little German play with the key-board covered by a cloth, and test him with nasty problems of modulation and sight-reading. No one, however, found it possible to trip the child ; he moved through the knottiest music as serenely as the scent of a flower moves through still air.

By the by, Wolferl was ill twice, not once, on this tour.

The good Archbishop of Salzburg gave Mozart an honorary post : that is, a post conveying distinction, but not money. An opera was produced in Vienna in September, 1767 ; and work went on steadily, with local fame increasing, for some little while.

Then at the end of 1769 Leopold and Wolfgang went to Italy. The young man—now thirteen years old—at once had an opera commissioned for Milan. He played and produced compositions in Rome, Bologna, Turin, Verona, Venice, Padua, and most other places which, in a map of artistic Italy in the eighteenth century, would be marked by a circle. The Pope made him a *cavaliere* of the Order of the Golden Spur, and Academical societies honoured him.

The line of his path was decorated both sides by extreme professional jealousies ; but Mozart and his music triumphed : the Milan opera (produced the year of Beethoven's birth)

was an enormous success, running for twenty nights.

Father and son were back in Salzburg by March, 1771. Fourteen years old, and therefore on the step to early middle-life, Mozart now wrote work after work with unbelievable speed and certainty, which only a view of the chronological table can make clear to us.

The good Archbishop died ; his successor was a bad man, and though Mozart was famous, and the pride of his country, the new Archbishop did little for him.

Wolfgang fell in love, years having slipped by to the number of twenty-one. To remove him from the girl, Leopold sent him to Paris again, this time with his mother. The visit was not a success : the mother died ; and Wolfgang came home alone, to find that the girl had changed towards him, her love becoming contempt. The letters sent from Paris about Anna Maria's illness and death are among the most loving, thoughtful, considerate yet written by a son to his bereaved father and sister.

Mozart's fame was solidified in January, 1771, by the success at Munich of the opera *Idomeneo*. Now, from his twenty-fifth year onward, he was the fully acknowledged Master.

The archbishop took pleasure in lowering his servant. Mozart had to live in the servants' hall, and he expected to do so without question, it being the custom of the aristocratic, pre-Revolu-

tion time ; but the lowest of the servants were taught to look on him with scorn, and to call him insulting names. After a while, Mozart resigned ; and the high-steward kicked him out of the room in which he presented his resignation.

Do not forget the name of the high-steward who, by kicking Mozart through a doorway, secured a deathless name in musical history : his name is Count Arco ; the date was June 8th, 1781.

Shortly after this loss of office, Mozart and Haydn met, to begin a ten years' friendship that witnesses the altering of the art of music. Haydn helped Mozart to acquire deeper expression in music, larger architectural sense and firmer principles of structure, and more majesty. Mozart helped Haydn to understand still more the resources of the orchestra, and to use more cultured melody and harmony of richer nature. In 1787, Haydn wrote in a letter :

> I wish earnestly that I could impress on all friends of music, and in particular on men in great positions, the same depth of sympathy and appreciation as I have regarding the inimitable works of Mozart ; that I might make others feel and enjoy them equally. Then nations would vie to possess this jewel. Prague ought to strive to retain this precious man ; but, moreover, to remunerate him, because

without such reward the lot of the artist is sad indeed.

Mozart was poor in the year of this letter. He was poor in 1781, and still poor in 1791. He was careless of money matters. Constanza was, in respect of management, an incompetent. When they married (August 4th, 1782), they had no money and few possessions. Within six months they fell into difficulties, and they never got out of them. Friends helped, and of course money was earned by compositions and by concerts; but life was always hand to mouth, and sometimes the mouth was ready almost before the hand.

These ten years (1781-1791) were packed with work. The operas *Figaro* and *Magic Flute* belong to them, likewise the greater symphonies, some of the finest instrumental music, the masses, and the great *Requiem*. Mozart still travelled about Germany—he was in Prussia two years before he died, where royalty was kind and fairly generous. Yet, as he wrote to a friend, he was still most unfortunate, ever hovering between hope and anxiety, and wondering how on earth the expenses of the coming month were to be met. In the end a fever seized him; it developed into typhus of the malignant type, and on the fifth of December, 1791, Wolferl died.

A number of friends, Salieri among them, attended the funeral. But a storm sprang up.

They did not go past the city gates, and only the professional undertakers went on to the grave.

The grave was one of the common paupers' graves. We don't know exactly where it is, only roughly. Still, a handsome monument now stands thereabouts, erected in December, 1889.

Thus Mozart was buried by official charity in a pauper's grave. A year or so before his death he wrote piteous letters begging for the loan of small sums of money.

He was poor because he could not control material things well. His sister said, "Apart from music, Wolfgang was ever a child : he was unable to manage money, and always required a guardian of some kind."

III

The common notion that poets and musicians drift through the world absent-mindedly, blind and deaf to all but the matters of the interior vision, is a wrong notion. Little poetasters and minor musicians may drift, or assume the manner of drifting ; but not the big men. These are as alert as any business man or novelist ; and their letters, literary studies, and books of reminiscences are more alive and characteristic than any produced by even the diplomatists or art-critics of their time.

Mozart was particularly gifted in observing

and recording what he observed ; and he can sketch a person with the simplicity, vigour, and exactness which mark the work of cartoonists or drawers like Kate Greenaway and Phil May. Here are a few specimens :

> Herr Graf is a dignified gentleman indeed. He wore a dressing-gown that I could wear in the streets without shame. His words are all on stilts ; and he has a habit of opening his mouth before he has decided what to say—so he often shuts it again without saying anything. . . .
>
> Herr Demmler falls into fits of laughter whenever I play ; because he is a queer creature, and when anything particularly pleases him he can't help laughing heartily : indeed, on this occasion he even began to swear in his delight. . . .
>
> It is enough to kill one with laughter to see these two organists. The second at the organ is like a child trying to lift a milestone. You can see anguish in his face. The other wears spectacles. I stood beside him at the organ, and watched to see if I could learn anything. He lifts his fingers from the keys at each note ! He believes it is his great gift to play extemporaneously in six parts ; but what he makes is mostly octaves and fifths.

He bubbled with high spirits, especially when writing to his sister. Here is a letter from Italy, written when the boy was fourteen :

My darling Sister,

To-morrow we dine with Herr von Mayer ; and do you know why ?

Guess !

Because he asked us !

The rehearsal to-morrow is to be in the theatre. I have been asked not to tell a soul, as all sorts of people would come crowding in, and we don't wish that.

So, my Child, I beg, my Child, that you will not utter a sound to anyone on the subject, or too many persons will come flocking in, my Child.

By the by, do you know the story of something that happened here ?

Well, I will tell you.

We were going straight home from Count Fireniani's, and when we got to our street we opened the door of our house ; and what do you think occurred ? We went in !

Good-bye, my pet.

Mozart loved being in Italy, but he did not like France. He was a proud German ; when homesick he (as in a later generation Liszt and Wagner) craved to be back in his native land, where the bulk of the people seemed to him true,

good, and upright : and he was passionately ambitious that the French should not only respect the Germans, but actually admit that in music the Germans were superior.

From Paris he wrote many letters during his 1778-1779 visit, in which he shows he was really distressed by the character of the French and their attitude.

" So far as music is concerned," he says, " I am surrounded by mere brute beasts. . . . The French are, and they always will be, downright donkeys, able to do nothing themselves, and so compelled to have recourse to foreigners.

" They scream and bawl, not sing, with all their might ; and as for their language (in the matter of musical composition, that is), the devil himself invented it . . . even German is divine in comparison."

The aristocracy were supercilious and not honest with him—the Duchess de Bourbon kept him waiting for an hour in a cold room when he had attended to play to her and her company, and then she settled down to drawing while he was playing ; and Duke of Guines tried to dodge payment for some of the lessons Mozart gave in his household, and kept him waiting months for payment of a harp and flute concerto supplied to order.

But

What provokes me most is that the stupid

> Frenchmen think I am still no more than seven years old, because they first saw me at that age !

He longed more and more for home, or to be taken again to Italy, in order to be brought back to life again :

> I shall be grateful to God if I get away with my natural taste uninjured. Every day I pray God of his grace to make me firm here, so that I may do honour to the whole German nation.

Mozart was very proud, with the fine pride of the sensitive artist, and the Parisians hurt him in every way : but he was as badly treated by the great folk at home, where the Count Arco's kick still rested in the future, awaiting the moment of its birth.

IV

Some of Mozart's music does not mean anything to-day. But this is the music which meant nothing to him when he wrote it. We must never forget that he, and others, often had to write for a living. A nobleman or a concert virtuoso wanted a piece, of a certain size for a certain instrument, and in a certain conventional style suitable for the period. The nobleman or virtuoso ordered the piece of the composer as he

might order a pair of boots, and the order was fulfilled.

The composer, acting to commission, did not fail in his duty of high art. He had to live, and high personal art did not afford the means. When we now come across one of these pieces, we are not to judge the composer by it. The music is not for us, any more than the pair of boots that survive in a museum to illustrate the times.

Statistical records are like condensed food; in the smallest space they contain the most substance. Therefore the following table, which tells the number of performances of Mozart's operatic works at the Hof-Theatre in Vienna between 1782 and 1890, reveals the individual and comparative popularity of the various plays.

Don Giovanni, 475.
The Magic Flute, 389.
The Marriage of Figaro, 323.
Il Seraglio, 162.
Cosi fan tutti, 95.
La clemenza di Tito, 84.
Der Schauspieldirector, 39.
Idomeneo, 19.

There are thirteen other operas named in the list of Mozart's works.

Don Giovanni, which heads the above list, did not reach Rome until the year 1886. It was performed there on June 20th, and was a com-

plete failure. The Roman audiences were not accustomed to vital recitative—that is, lengthy passages of action leading to solo and concerted numbers, and set to music of the time and cadence of ordinary speech ; they were likewise unaccustomed to quiet dramatic movement, preferring the conventional melodramatic activity of their own contemporary writers. The performance closed amid yelling, cat-calls, and hissing ; and it was only the beautiful singing of two of the actors that kept the audience quiet enough for the end to be reached. Otherwise the opera was very badly played, and so the work had no true chance to reveal itself to the Roman opera-goers.

This opera was sold to the Vienna Hof-Theatre (that is, the Imperial Opera) by Mozart, the sale according all rights of performance to the management, for a small sum of money, the equivalent of about twenty pounds sterling. But *Don Giovanni* was not an immediate public success : it was given fourteen times in the first year (1788) by the theatre owning it ; then it was dropped for ten years. The revival in 1798 developed into a steady life, and four hundred and sixty performances were given in the Hof-Theatre between 1798 and 1888.

Gluck's great fame, and the popularity of his operas, were naturally affected by Mozart's successes, and the older man has been accused of unsympathetic feelings to the younger. Leopold,

MOZART

in a letter written when Wolfgang was twelve, says Gluck was envious of his son.

But Gluck admired Mozart and acted always with good will towards him. He attended performances of his symphonies (particularly first performances) and of his operas. Indeed, he was the means of at least one special performance, as Mozart himself tells us :

> My opera, *Il Seraglio*, was given again yesterday, by Gluck's desire. Gluck was very complimentary to me about it. I dine with him to-morrow.

So far the music of Mozart has not been ever put aside. Bach counted for little during the fifty years following his death. Mendelssohn was more or less turned down by advanced musicians after about 1875. Some ten years ago the modernist people voted Beethoven *fadé;* and Haydn to-day is occasionally referred to as an insufferably tedious old bore. Wagner and Brahms are likewise put aside by one school or another. Liszt is not regarded as a great composer by many persons of true culture. The musicians of the Palestrina and Elizabethan periods were lost sight of for two centuries. Handel's repute has had some strange ups and downs.

But the position of Mozart has been steady. The general opinion seems to have been un-

brokenly held that he is the one composer of pure mastery : this and that other composer has been discussed in terms outside of music—Bach in the terms of the German Protestant religion, Beethoven in the terms of the new post-Revolutionary spirit of mankind, and so on ; through it all Mozart has been discussed only in the terms of absolute music.

The truth of this can be proved by a circumstance not directly concerned with his music.

Some artists attract attention by their personality, for example, Liszt, Chopin, Beethoven, and Berlioz. Quite apart from their creative works they are men in whom the world is warmly interested. Such an artist in poetry was Byron.

Other artists attract attention by their work ; their individual personality is not a matter of absorbing general interest. Shakespeare was of this class. Now as time goes on, the steady regard paid to their works gradually arouses interest in the men themselves ; students begin to observe very intently the person who made those works ; and every scrap and item of intelligence that can be discovered is brought together, until a picture is made of the man : generally such a recovered picture is finer, because more powerfully the work of creative imagination and because constructed of an understanding of the soul of the man (the understanding being the product of a hundred years' knowledge of his art),

than any picture determined on of a man who was a public curiosity in his lifetime.

The great biographical interest in Mozart began almost three-quarters of a century after his death : and moreover the interest began in the midst of the great æsthetic turmoil of the latter portion of Wagner's life, when the Music of the Future and Programme Music were the fiery subjects of debate, not the calm music of the past, with its exclusive " absolutism."

VIII. BEETHOVEN

These men . . . give to nations and periods the human countenance. They are, in art, the incarnations [of their time and country]. . . . Homer is the great Pelasgian ; Æschylus, the great Hellene ; Isaiah, the great Hebrew ; Juvenal, the great Roman ; Dante, the great Italian ; Shakespeare, the great Englishman ; Beethoven, the great German. . . . Beethoven is the German soul.

VICTOR HUGO.—William Shakespeare, IV (1864).

. . . The Elysian glory of your chant
Became the wonder of our kind,
Diffused on Earth for mortal want—
Purest that ever soul may find,
By thought born of a lonely mind—
Forged of necessity, in grief,
Where joy was oft an absent mate
And blessedness, in life too brief ·
And, yearning only to be great,
Not to seem so, you crushed out hate
With " tender eyes of speaking sadness ; "
And goodness was to you assigned,
The smile that lightens up with gladness,
The courage of an end resigned
Over to love a heart consigned. . . .
And as you climb the mystic stair
Out of your spirit's stormy hour,
A sense of Halcyon-calm is there,
Tender as moonlight, or a flower,
Conscious of strength and noble power ;
As if in loneliness you felt
Impassioned movement surge and rove
In music's sound, till all hearts melt
Responding, merged with One above,
United in a greater love
Where God's own symphonies are blended
With Heaven and Earth, for music's sake ;
As if some Spirit bright descended,
Deserting Paradise, to make
Immortal melodies awake. . . .
And, as on eagle's pinions stirred,
We mount aloft, and freely see
The larger life, where, undeterred,
The soul from body dare be free,
Uplifted to sublimity.
And scattering showers of Heavenly fire,
Or murmuring like a brooding dove—
Filling the wine-cup of desire
Brimful of light and shade of Love,
Man's Immortality you prove.

EVA MARY GREW (1924).

VIII. BEETHOVEN

I

Every great artist is free. The character, and the rules and practices, of a living religion may impose certain external conditions on his work. He may have to serve a public or a type of patron. He may have to labour with more or less restricted material and undeveloped instruments. But he is always free, whether circumstanced as Palestrina or Bach, as Purcell or Haydn, or as Gluck or Mozart.

This freedom, however, is that sort of freedom-under-law which, in the general world, makes the good citizen. It is the freedom of the individual in a world of general order. The mass of men have agreed that certain things are necessary for the stability and general well-being of humanity ; those things are Law, which all must obey. Within the circle of law, we have absolute freedom ; and the greater our intelligence the wider and more active our freedom.

The law in art is formed of the things that make for beauty, permanent strength, and power to please permanently vast masses of people. Every artist obeys the law, and being a man of the greatest possible intelligence, he obeys it with individual freedom.

Beethoven differs from the earlier masters in one vital respect, namely, that he was not conditioned in his art by any externally operative law of religion or custom. He did not write for

church, patron, or public, but for the universal spirit of art. And so his music came nearest to universal humanity, and he was the first of all composers to prove to poets and philosophers that music was the same—in its appeal and ultimate purpose—as philosophy and poetry.

This means that with Beethoven a new element came into music, or to speak more carefully, that with him an already existing element was wrought to supreme place.

He came at the parting of ways. A change came over Europe when, in the 15th century, the old Greek thought was spread abroad, forming the Renaissance. Another change came when, at the close of the eighteenth century, the last of the feudal structures of mediæval times were removed.

This second change affected thought and religion, and therefore the greater kinds of art.

Beethoven belonged to both worlds. From the one he gathered intellectual and architectural strength ; from the other a new emotional force and a fresh understanding : he brought novel ideas into an established language ; and he developed an established language, so that it became the vehicle for novel ideas. The result was art of a Shakespearean or Grecian stability and power.

All thought of Beethoven should be companioned by the knowledge that he was not pure German, but of Flemish descent, and so with a

blood in his veins that made him non-Teutonic in respect of independence and courage.

The men coming next after him belonged exclusively to the new world. They were not, like him, foundationed in the securities of the past ; and they had not his Shakespearean mind. When, like Berlioz and Liszt, they did not understand the old great forms, they had to invent something new ; and so they had not Beethoven's advantage of an approved architecture. When, like Schumann and Chopin, they were men of a locality rather than men of a universe, they had to write only small kinds of music—songs, dances, and the equivalent of lyric poems. The greatest of the men after Beethoven was Wagner ; but Wagner wrote no music of importance apart from the stage.

Beethoven is a Colossus striding the boundary of two worlds. More than that, he is in some respects as a figure under which music before and after him moves. But it is not altogether wise in the present generation to think and speak thus of this composer, because for the moment the modernist mind is not in tune with him.

II

The childhood of this man was sad. Indeed, without conventional sentiment we can say it had a Dickensian sadness, with in addition a rare sensitiveness and consciousness in the subject.

The family were exceedingly poor. The father was a member of the Court Band, whose salary would be not more than twenty or thirty pound a year. On this they had to live ; yet the father was a drunkard, a dark, harsh man, who to gain his own way would act with brutality. The mother, whose father had been a head-cook, was a gentle and kindly woman : she died young, when Ludwig was seventeen. (At the time of his mother's death, Ludwig became officially the head of the family ; collecting his father's salary, and watching that the police did not get hold of him when he was drunk.)

The grandfather had been a remarkable man—alert, lively, with extraordinarily bright eyes : Ludwig remembered him, and spoke of him all through his life, although he had died as early as 1773.

There were some brothers. Caspar, four years younger than Ludwig, left a son who figures largely in the life of the composer : he is known as "Beethoven's nephew." Johann, six years younger, was the member of the family who became an apothecary and acted the superior over Ludwig in later life : Johann and Ludwig never hit things off well.

The father drove Ludwig to music. He saw he was gifted, even as early as 1774, and in order to make money out of his gifts went so far as to lock him in a room to practise. There was some attendance at the common school of the place,

which ended by the time Ludwig was thirteen. A few friends helped him with music and general knowledge. But he was never properly educated or trained.

Before Ludwig was twelve he was acting as deputy-organist ; within a further year he was directing rehearsals for opera ; and up to the age of fifteen or sixteen he was by various means earning a little money to help at home. Much of his work, however, was unpaid ; and ten shillings a week was probably the extent of his average earnings.

Ludwig composed plenty of music before he was seventeen ; at eleven he could play the *Well-tempered Clavier*, and his extemporaneous playing was always unusually good.

All this work was laborious. For a time he had to play the organ for six o'clock mass every day, whatever the time of the year or the state of the weather. And home was always wretched.

Clever young musicians in Germany used always to get acquainted with members of the aristocracy or with well-to-do folk, because these were interested in music, and because the very low social standing of the musician made it possible for the noble persons to mix with the musicians without risk of misunderstanding : being right out of the social world, there was no danger of the musicians thinking the familiarity could be an offer of admission to the social world.

Thus before he was twenty Beethoven knew important men and women. Some of these became genuine friends, as the Count Waldstein, and the family of the von Breuning's : the latter helped him to pupils, and opened his mind to literature.

Local reputation gathered as young manhood approached, and the Elector did something to aid Beethoven's further studies. That is, he made it possible for him to go to Vienna to take lessons from the masters there—Haydn, Salieri, and Albrechtsberger. As to whether or no the Elector found any money for the journey, we are not sure. At first Beethoven was going to Vienna only for a while ; but his life there became permanent, and he never returned to the old university city of Bonn, by the Rhine he so much loved.

It was in 1792 that this change took place ; at that time Beethoven was an anti-Revolutionist, but he rapidly became a strong Republican.

Six weeks after the new life began in Vienna, the poor wretched father died at Bonn. Ludwig had the three surviving children to look after. The assured income of the family amounted to several shillings a week.

Thirty-five years of the mightiest work of humanity stretched before Beethoven, the details of which lie in all books on the composer.

In 1796 deafness began to develop ; this was terribly inconvenient, making it almost impos-

sible for him to do any practical work with music. By 1801 the deafness was almost complete.

III

Beethoven craved love. He always longed to have one precious soul near him, of whom he could think constantly, and in whose perpetual thought he could rest. For four years—1806-1810, he was betrothed to Theresa von Brunsvik, and the two truly loved one another. But circumstances interfered, and they did not marry: perhaps Beethoven could not bring himself to the drastic changes in life which marriage must compel; and so at the age of forty he parted from Theresa, and continued his strange life.

Beethoven did not succeed in building up a comfortable home. He never managed to surround himself with conveniences, order and system. He could not command the grateful comfort of regularity. He was, indeed, a wanderer from lodgings to lodgings, unstable as regards locality as an Arab of the desert, but unlike the Arab not able to fold his home in a tent and erect it elsewhere so that in a moment it presented the same familiar outlines.

His rooms were untidy, and he was untidy in person. Books, music, letters, food, clothes, and odds and ends were jumbled together; and though it threw him into a rage not to be able to

find anything the moment he wanted it, he never learned how to systematize the placing and storing of goods. In these respects he was peculiar ; not because he was artist, musician, genius, but because domestically he was awkward and incompetent by nature : there are many bad managers in the world who are not highly gifted in special directions.

Landladies and Beethoven were always at loggerheads. He hated and detested them. They probably hated and detested him, and with ample cause, since he was the most troublesome lodger any poor woman could have to endure. His clumsiness and untidiness ruined their furniture ; his erratic habits upset their arrangements ; his peremptory manner left them no minute of peace, and they could only be sure of one thing, try how they might, which was that he would never be pleased and satisfied. They robbed him ; and if they did not rob him, he thought they did, and accused them with ferocity.

Beethoven was of the kind that cannot keep a servant. We generally find that a housewife who has to change her servants every few weeks is mostly to blame, being over-exacting, unconscionably superior, and selfish. Beethoven was not of this kind, but simply of the kind that frightens folk.

By good fortune, he might have found the perfect servant—a man or woman to understand him ; he would then have loved that person.

But such good fortune did not come his way, and so his miseries here were perpetual.

It seems that most of his servants were unusually incompetent. They let his rooms go cold, and cooked his food badly.

"No soup to-day, no beef, no eggs, and at last broiled meat from the inn," wrote Beethoven. "When Holtz was with me lately there was almost nothing to eat at supper, and such is the woman's bold and insolent behaviour, that I have told her to-day I will not let her remain beyond the end of the month."

And again: "Baberl and Nany, my precious servants, were occupied from seven to ten at night trying to heat the stove: the bitter cold gave me a chill, and all yesterday I could hardly move a limb. You are aware that on the same day I discharged Baberl. I cannot endure either of these vile creatures."

Here are some notes from his diary: the years are 1819 and 1820, when the master was at work on the *Mass in D* and the *Choral Symphony:*

Jan.	31.	Gave the housekeeper warning.
Feb.	15.	The kitchenmaid came.
Mar.	8.	The kitchenmaid gave a fortnight's notice.
Mar.	22.	The new housekeeper came.
July	20.	Gave the housekeeper warning.
April	17.	The kitchenmaid came.

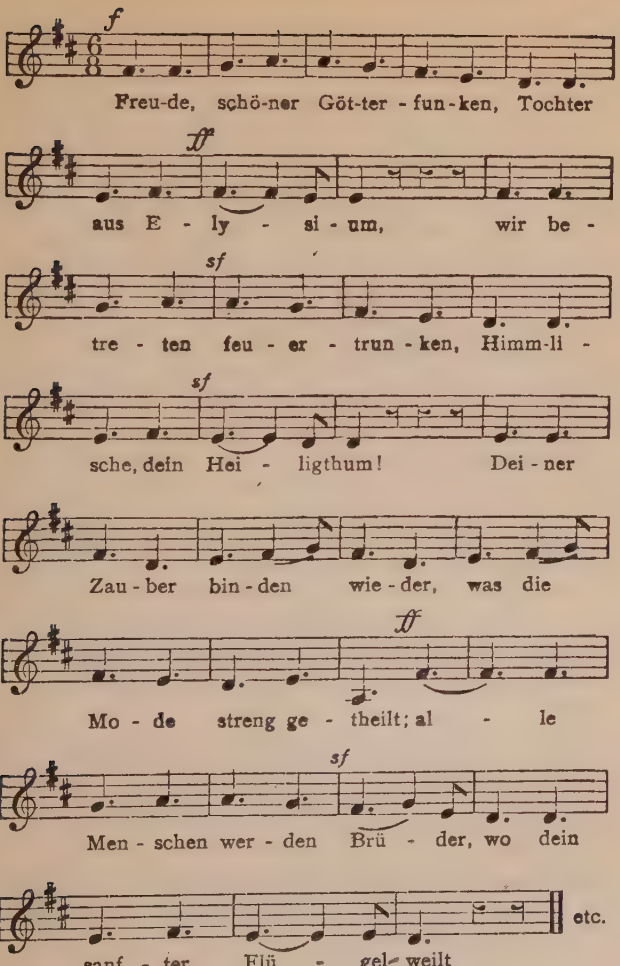
May 16. Gave warning to the kitchenmaid.
May 19. The kitchenmaid left. (*Evidently something particularly wrong, since the girl cleared out in three days.*)
May 30. The woman came.
July 1. The kitchenmaid arrived.
July 28. At night the kitchenmaid ran away.
July 30. The woman came.
Aug. 28. The woman's month expires.
Sept. 6. The girl came.
Oct. 22. The girl left.
Dec. 12. The kitchenmaid came.
Dec. 18. Gave the kitchenmaid warning.
Dec. 27. The new maid came.

Beethoven interviewed all these servants, selecting them from the other applicants. He endured their services, and they endured him, for a little while. And then he gave them warning ; except when the girl ran away at night.

Consider the incessant restlessness of these conditions ; and then call to mind that great theme of the *Choral Symphony*, over which Beethoven had brooded (with "mighty wings outspred," like the Spirit in the opening of "Paradise Lost") for thirty years.

Beethoven packed Baberl off about her business. "I wonder," he wrote in a letter, "if Nany will behave rather better from the departure of her colleague. I doubt it, but in that case I shall send her packing without ceremony. She is too

CARL MARIA VON WEBER


f
Freu-de, schö-ner Göt-ter - fun-ken, Tochter
ff
aus E - ly - si - um, wir be -
sf
tre - ten feu - er - trun - ken, Himm-li -
sf
sche, dein Hei - ligthum! Dei - ner
Zau - ber bin - den wie - der, was die
ff
Mo - de streng ge - theilt; al - le
sf
Men - schen wer - den Brü - der, wo dein
sanf - ter Flü - gel weilt
etc.

uneducated for a housekeeper, indeed quite a beast."

In another letter he said, "I have been obliged to endure a great deal from Nany, and I shot half a dozen books at her head, by way of a New Year's gift. . . . Probably they chanced to come into collision with her dull brain or her bad heart; at all events, she now plays the part of a penitent swindler." Nany, one fancies, tried hard to give satisfaction, though low as a brute in mentality. Others, more gifted, and so perhaps animated by a greater sense of dignity, would not tolerate this treatment.

Beethoven threw more unpleasant things than books at his servants. He was fond of a bread-soup, which he made himself. In the ingredients were ten eggs, which he broke carefully and watched closely to see if they were thoroughly fresh: if a bad one turned up, he cursed the cook, and flung it at her head. She dodged the missile, and the kitchenmaid cleared up the mess.

These pictures are unpleasant. But it is well to know of them. The man of creative genius no more claims the calm and remote philosophy of a god than the merchant, mechanic, or drill-sergeant. His excuse for defects, however, is less complete according to the measure and character of his genius.

Yet Beethoven had some special excuses. Good health did not go with him through life;

and physical discomfort generally makes men and women hasty and ill-tempered who are of impassioned nature and who are driven by the sense of some high mission to labour solely to one supreme end : the illness is a hindrance ; the hindrance fills them with rage ; and the rage vents itself on some other condition or circumstance which happens to add to the annoyance—in this case, dishonest, incompetent, or nervous servants.

Then, as we know, Beethoven was deaf, from early middle life on to the end. All that easy intercourse with the world which comes, automatically, and for the most part unconsciously, through the hearing was denied him ; driven in too much on himself, he had no immediate social relaxation : far worse, he was made suspicious, until he felt like a blind man among enemies or ill-bred mischievous youngsters.

Chiefly, however, he was a man apart from the ordinary world : he knew his powers were exceptional, and that time was short for the carrying-out of the work for which he was made—the making of some of the greatest music this earth can know, which none but he could effect ; the ordinary world, filled with unnecessary, transient things and concerns, wearied him, until by reaction he repelled it with the violence he used against his servants. Other men as great as Beethoven have perhaps suffered fools gladly, or at least have known how to avoid them ;

Beethoven had not the blessing of that gift, and so was agitated, in the midst of sublime conceptions and heroic labours, by the commonness of the common world of near-by persons.

He who was lifted by genius into a world so pure as to be Heaven, by other defective qualities was lowered into the uncleanness of the herd. Such conflicting influences and contrary conditions made him what he was, a violent man, who threw books at the head of a kitchenmaid, and a man of clumsy humour, who threw bad eggs at his cook ; a lover of the country superior to Wordsworth, who had to live in miserable lodgings ; and a man whose face shone almost with the light of divinity when he met in the street a proved friend.

All his ills were of the kind that pass in the moment of their being, or are buried with a man ; the good he effected was of the permanent kind : without Beethoven, the world would not be the same place. His influence, spiritual and æsthetic, has been accepted by millions during the past hundred years ; and as he improved, strengthened, and developed music, so he made better men and women of music-lovers.

His habits were indirect and untidy ; but his mind was straight in all things that really matter in the long run, and his soul was as pure as strong.

BEETHOVEN

IV

The idea was held for a long time that Beethoven was swift and, indeed, headlong, in his way of composing music. People thought that things came to him in a flash, and that he worked in a cloud of glory, nearly unconscious of what he was doing and unable to control the creative activities of the inspiration descending upon him. And these people were not the ordinary persons afflicted by sentimentality ; among them were fine intellectuals like François Joseph Fétis (1784-1871), the historian and theorist, and composers like Berlioz.

It was held that he had no thought for the laws of art or the particular science of music, and therefore that his creations were spontaneous and their success accidental.

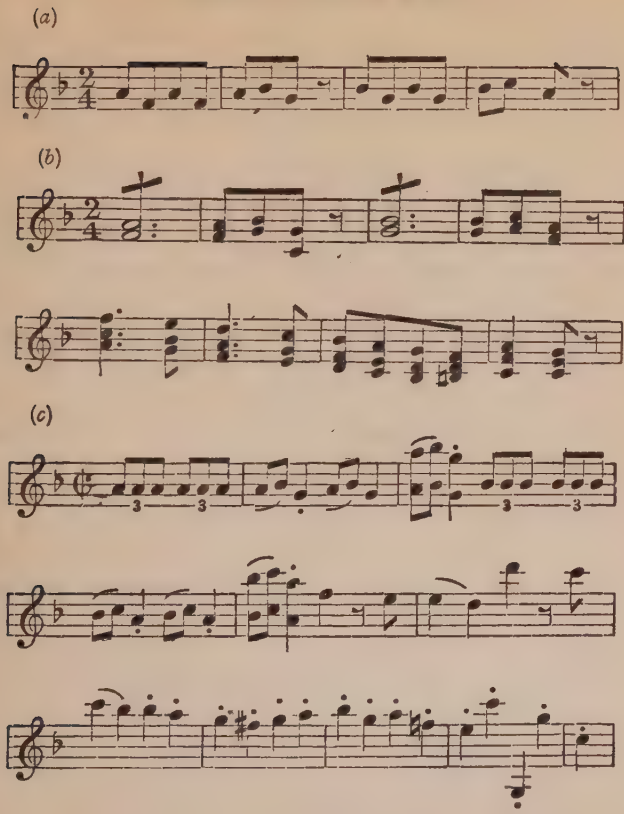
Such ideas are not only wrong in the case of Beethoven, but false generally. Works of art are not made that way, except short impassioned lyrics of a personal nature, and songs of the same kind. A man cannot write a play or sonata by rhapsody any more than he can so design a military campaign. For one thing, the act of creation takes too long—weeks, and often months; for another, a large work is too varied, containing in its total not just one single thought or fancy, but a whole host of ideas, all of which have to be wrought into a final unity. As well fancy an explorer surveys a strange part of the world in a

Beethoven of enthusiasm as that Beethoven looked into the unknown and non-existent with the eyes of a mystic prophet: his vision was as your vision or mine when we set out on a little daily material task, and he controlled the workings of his mind.

We know out of written records that pieces of music grew under his hand as slowly—comparatively speaking—as the oak grows: themes, rhythmical *motives* or patterns, and harmonies, were years perfecting themselves; and they generally started in forms so commonplace and insignificant that an ordinary man would have rejected them.

He made use of sketch-books, in which he jotted down ideas as they came to him, altering and amplifying the reminder until the shape became what is now familiar to us in the completed works. No great creator in any art was probably so "tentative" in his way of making pieces: years often passed between the inception of an idea and the finishing of the work of which it was to be the foundation. This was a wonder to men like Schubert, who could not understand either the patience or the need for the patience.

The following illustrate the growth of one of his most exhilarating themes. It belongs to the eighth symphony. Pattern (*a*) is the primary idea; (*c*) is the theme as it stands in the symphony; (*b*) is one of the intermediary conditions of the idea.



By 1814 his fame had become European. But the cause was less his Absolute music than his expressed anti-Napoleonism and the occasional pieces written to celebrate events of the war.

The Viennese did not care for his works, because the sublimity of them was over their

heads : what they wanted was Rossini ; the *Choral Symphony*, however, and the *Mass in D* touched them when—in 1824—these works were produced.

He made no money by his compositions, or what money he made by some pieces was lost in the charges for publishing others. There were heavy legal expenses incurred in the matter of his guardianship of the son of Caspar ; and at times Beethoven was so poor that his boots were too worn-out to take him into the city. Known all over Europe as the mightiest genius in music, he lived in wretchedness only a little less extreme than that of his childhood.

Yet at the close he reached the internal life which is expressed in the ninth symphony ; and so undoubtedly the joy he knew was transcendental. To win such joy as this in the close of life is to succeed in life.

Activity, variety, strength, ease, and every kind of happiness named by philosophers, are in Beethoven's later music. In the happiness we can feel irony, humour, facetiousness, brooding contemplation, recollected sorrow or anger, and a thousand other points and colours according to our own minds and experiences ; but *the end* is still happiness, as it always is with men of spiritual courage. . . . Only the poet of power can write of Beethoven ; and so the young reader —the music-lover who has perhaps been told that Beethoven is stodgy, or who has perhaps found

him stodgy when played at concerts, should read what Victor Hugo wrote of him in the book entitled "William Shakespeare."

This music of the last period has always been either loved or disliked. Critics who were drawn to the earlier sonatas, symphonies, and chamber compositions were driven back by the last groups of quartets, the final piano sonatas, and the ninth symphony. They found these the product of a madman—or at least of a man who had lost command of his art. Most of us to-day, with the advantage of a hundred years' accumulated experience and knowledge, find them simple with that ultimate simplicity which is in works like "Hamlet" and "Sámson Agonistes"; we can listen to them with that ease which comes of inspiration—inspiration being the activity of the faculties when wrought to the highest possible pitch. Provided only the performance be adequate (and it is not always so) a late sonata or quartet so takes hold of the mind that we are not conscious of time during its rendering, and the art appears to pass into a dimension where time is not; that is, it draws into the condition of a space-art and seems to exist complete to a momentary act of apprehension. (This is rather intricate thought; but it can be understood by aid of Mozart's remark that a piece of music was to him like a statue.)

Yet even in the twentieth century there are critics who say that these latest compositions of

Beethoven are failures ; and Tolstoy's view of them is that they are unnatural and therefore not art.

Ludwig Spohr (1784-1859), the violinist, conductor, and composer, who knew Beethoven personally and admired him, was one of the clever musicians of the period who thought the last works bad : he wrote of the matter in his autobiography, a quotation from which will be as the voice of a contemporary speaking to us :

> Up to 1815 there was no apparent falling off in the creative powers of Beethoven. But from 1815 onwards he could no longer hear music, owing to increasing deafness, and this must have adversely affected the working of his mind. Therefore his constant effort to be original and to move in new paths could not, as formerly, be guarded from error by the guidance of the ear. It is not to be wondered at that his music became more and more eccentric, incoherent, and incomprehensible. There are people who imagine they understand the later works, and who out of the pleasure they profess to receive rank them higher than the earlier works. I am not of their number, and admit that I have never been able to relish the last compositions of Beethoven. I must even place the Ninth Symphony among those I reckon failures : there are flashes of genius in the first three movements, but these three

movements are worse than the eight preceding symphonies ; and the fourth movement is, in my opinion, so monstrous and tasteless, and (in the conception it displays of Schiller's Ode) so trivial, that I fail to understand how a man of Beethoven's genius could have written it. I find in this fourth movement a further proof of what I had already observed in Vienna—that Beethoven was wanting in æsthetical sensibility and in a feeling for the beautiful.

Like most well-detailed criticisms, this of Spohr's throws more light on the critic than on the object discussed ; and if we study the character of Spohr, we shall find it a reasonable exposition. He was a good, simple, and kindly man, a fine artist and earnest musician, but by nature confined to a narrow round of sympathies, and so without the power of imagination to project himself into the mind of a man of totally different kind from his own kind. Vigour to him was coarseness, and vast architectural forms were shapeless according to the measure of their vastness. Lacking the comprehensive view, he could not see elements in due proportion, and as a result anything new or highly individual was unpleasant because seemingly wilful and arbitrary.

He simply could not understand things foreign to his nature ; and it is probably quite true that when a pupil played to him Beethoven's piano sonata in E minor, Op. 90 (a work on the thres-

hold of the final period), Spohr said, "And have you composed much more in that style?"

V

Beethoven was a man of great physical strength. He was not tall, but short, and of a sturdy build, with broad shoulders. All the pictures of him show a rugged forehead and remarkably thick and rumpled hair. His laugh matched his hair and forehead, being generally loud, and sometimes strident, as though forced through rusty hinges. But his smile was like the smile of a child, being formed in every feature at once. His eyes were perhaps the most wonderful ever seen; they shone with a piercing light in moments of rapture, reflecting the mighty soul within the man; but they varied in expression, as in apparent colour, ranging from black to a bluish grey. Beethoven's were the eyes of the man who sees invisible things—the mystic, and the visionary. It is quite easy to understand that his general expression was one of melancholy.

That terrible deafness drove Beethoven in upon himself more than was good. Towards the end of his life he had the habit of sitting in a corner of a room in some inn, smoking a long pipe, his eyes closed. When a friend approached and touched him, he would open his eyes, smile in a sad manner—the sadness of resignation, draw from

his pocket the little note-book by which people communicated with him in writing, and hand it to the friend, probably saying something in a voice that, in the later years, was thin and cracked.

He died of pleurisy, aggravated first by neglect on the part of his nephew, and then by wrong medical treatment. He was ill for three months, and proved to be a gentle patient, causing little trouble.

The actual dissolution was a moment of terror, his powerful body instinctively repelling death. Beethoven went out in a thunder-storm. With him was a young musician, a stranger to Beethoven, named Anselm Hüttenbrenner.

His books, furniture, and manuscripts at the sale after the funeral realized 1,575 florins ; the original manuscripts of symphonies went for a few shillings each. The entire estate on the day he died was worth a thousand pounds, or a little more; which sum is the weekly income of a millionaire grocer or boot manufacturer. There are popular singers who earn a thousand pounds in three concerts, and more than one singer in opera receives a thousand pounds for a single performance.

IX. SCHUBERT

Schubert's my name ; I am Schubert :
And as such I come before you.
What the great men yet have furnished,
I acknowledge and revere it ;
But the same still stays beyond me.
To the Art that twineth garlands—
Gathers flowers, selects and binds them,
Flowers only can I offer,
Offer them for your own choosing.
It delights me if you praise me ;
If you blame me I can bear it.
I am Schubert—I am Schubert :
I nor hinder nor invite you ;
But if you would trace my footsteps
Gladly, be it so ! then follow.

FRANZ GRILLPARZER (1791–1872).

IX. SCHUBERT

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, poets learned to sing again. There is a quantity of good lyrical poetry which belongs to the Age of Reason, as the clear-minded generations of the eighteenth century are called; and as our imaginative understanding of men and art develops, we see that in this quantity of poetry is a fair measure of true feeling—that is, the poetry moves us emotionally when we read it.

But the finest lyrical poetry in England, for example, written between say 1660 and 1760, is in no degree or kind the same as the lyrical poetry written by Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth, and Coleridge, between 1792 and 1830. These later men owned lyric rapture, especially the first-named pair, and they *sang* their thoughts with a musical energy of mood and expression.

It is the great feature of the work of Schubert that, in the domain of the solo song with accompaniment, he was as Keats and Shelley were in lyrical poetry.

Songs existed before him. Leaving out of consideration folk-songs and national-songs, we can study an unbroken line of art-songs through several centuries, many of which are of impassioned nature. There are also some thousands of opera and oratorio arias that are entirely lyrical, as Handel's "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

Yet nearly all these earlier songs have something instrumental in their constitution and nature. They have abstract qualities more than

lyrical, being born less of a particular poetical mood (such as the mood of Keats and Shelley) than of a general musical feeling and power. And in the case of the opera and oratorio songs, they are part of a larger work, only in relation to which do they attain their full character. Their composers were dramatists, or musicians absolute.

Schubert was a poet, who re-expressed in tone the thoughts and moods of other poets whose art is verbal. He was the first musician of this kind, and he stands to solo song as Haydn stands to the symphony, as Weber to the modern romantic opera, and as Liszt and Berlioz to the modern tone-poem.

His songs number seven or eight hundred (603 are available); among them are 67 from Goethe, 54 from Schiller, and 54 from Mayrhofer. But his works in other forms are equally voluminous. He wrote music as readily as a bird sings, and he really seems to have forgotten a finished composition almost as a bird forgets what it has done.

I

Schubert was surrounded by a family of schoolmasters. His grandfather was a peasant living in Moravia, two of whose sons—Franz and Carl—became schoolmasters in Vienna.

Franz had four sons—Ignaz, Ferdinand, Carl, and Franz Peter—all of whom began to earn

their living by teaching in schools ; and a daughter of his, Theresa, married a schoolmaster.

Franz Peter was not a successful teacher of the rudiments of general knowledge to boys and girls.

The family was poor. Franz had married almost before reaching manhood. His wife, Elizabeth Fitz, by profession a cook before marriage, bore him fourteen children ; only the five named, however, living beyond infancy. Elizabeth died in 1812 ; and her husband, marrying again, made himself responsible for the support and upbringing of another five children.

His son Franz Peter could not ever be supported by him ; and when the composer died it was computed that the total value of the material things he left behind him, was about fifty shillings: among those material things was a heap of manuscript music, some of which, after nearly a hundred years, the world cherishes as part of the loveliest art of all time.

When five or six years old, Franz Peter used to be taken into a pianoforte factory by a boy-friend who, it seems, was employed there. He picked up for himself the elements of piano playing, much preferring the new instruments in the factory to the poor, worn-out piano at home.

His musicianship became unusually apparent before he was seven, and his father took him in hand for violin playing, the brother Ignaz helping with piano playing.

There was plenty of music-making at home ; Fritz would have heard and recognized musical sounds before he knew words. He was a bright, jolly child, and quick at school, for all his musical gifts : from the beginning he was, in fact, what he remained through life, namely, a natural human being who enjoyed existence.

The boy soon went beyond the teaching and executive abilities of father and brother. A local choirmaster, Michael Holzer, was engaged to give him lessons in theory, organ playing, and piano playing ; but as Holzer said years later, if ever he wished to teach the boy anything, he found the subject was already mastered.

Schubert was unfortunate in that he never had good instruction : more than any other natural genius, he wanted a scientific training ; yet those who had to teach him always failed to give it. Thus Holzer said, " I merely amused myself, and gazed on my pupil with astonishment : " and a later teacher, named Ruczicka, said, " God has been his teacher ; already he knows everything ! " This neglect was bad for the boy and the cause of some defects in his creative work.

For a while Franz Peter sang in the choir of the parish church. Then, in 1808, he was admitted to the choir of the Imperial Chapel, where the Italian composer, Antonio Salieri, was in chief command.

Salieri (1750-1825) was a fine musician of the clear-headed, formal type characteristic of his

country in the latter half of the eighteenth century ; he was not by nature able to sympathize with the German music of Haydn and Mozart, and the music of Beethoven was probably unpleasant to him.

The Imperial choristers lived in the Convict School. Here they lodged, studied music and general subjects, and took all the food that was given them : the food was not enough for hard-working, growing boys ; the boys would have bitterly appreciated the story of Oliver Twist wanting "some more," and Franz in 1812 wrote to his brother Ferdinand, asking for the gift of a few kreutzen a month : *You know*, he said in the letter, *from experience, how one can enjoy eating a roll and a couple of apples when one must wait eight and a half hours between a poor dinner and a poorer supper.* This was when Franz was fifteen years old, and when his life in the school had lasted four years.

There was a band attached to the school, formed of teachers and pupils. Schubert, a stocky, round-faced boy in spectacles, was put among the first violins. Before long he was made leader, and eventually he became deputy conductor.

Through these years the boy composed in every free moment, provided only he had paper on which to write. He had written even while at home ; and now he produced songs, piano works, cantatas, and orchestral pieces—all made

to an impulse that never left him as long as he lived.

Salieri taught him for a while, but could not bring his finely regulated mind and the impulsive mind of Schubert into any agreement ; and so the lessons were dropped. It was here that Schubert and Ruczicka tried to work together.

Among the works made during the five years spent in the Convict School was Schubert's first symphony in D major ; the symphony was played by the band : when it was first heard in England, some seventy years later, the audiences were amazed at the beauty and character of the instrumentation.

When, in October, 1813, Schubert left the Convict and returned home, he was nearly seventeen, and more than half his life had passed. He craved to be a musician, and only a musician ; but there was no means to make this possible : therefore he took a little training in the business of teaching general subjects, and became the junior instructor at his father's school. (By this engagement he avoided conscription.) Theresa says he was bad-tempered there, too strict with the children, enforcing his commands with boxing their ears, and so a failure.

II

Schubert's life from now onward was tropical, flourishing with compositions, so lengthy, varied,

rich, and at times inspired that the world must always look on it with wonder. Consider the following abstract of two years :

1814 (May-July)	The first Mass.
(January-May)	Opera, *Des Teufels Lustschloss.*
	A *Salve Regina* for tenor and orchestra.
	3 string quartets(one known as Op. 168).
	5 minuets and 6 waltzes, for strings and horns.
(Oct. 19th)	Song, *Gretchen am Spinnrade.*
	16 other songs.
1814-1815	Second symphony.
1815 (May-July)	Third symphony.
(Mch. 25th-Apr. 1st)	String quartet in G minor.
	4 sonatas for piano, in C, F, E, and E again.
	The *Adagio in G.*
	12 waltzes.
	8 Écossaises.
	10 variations for piano.
	2 masses.
	A *Stabat Mater*, a *Salve Regina*, and other similar works.

	5 works for the stage, in 1, 2, or 3 acts.
(August)	30 songs.
(Oct. 15th)	8 songs.
(Oct. 19th)	7 songs.
	101 further songs, some filling twenty or more pages in the printed edition.

The church music was performed in local churches, sometimes with one brother conducting and another playing at the organ. A girl named Thérèse Grob sang the soprano solos ; perhaps Schubert was in love with her, because he visited the Grobs continually until she married (which was when Schubert was twenty-two or twenty-three) and then stayed away. Thérèse, now Frau Bergmann, seems to have lived for about a half-century longer than Franz.

Two vital friendships formed by Schubert were with the poet Johann Mayrhofer and the singer Johann M. Vogl (1768-1840).

Mayrhofer was a grim spirit, over-grave, mystical, and doomed eventually to a death by suicide. He and Schubert lived together for some years : says the poet :

" The house was in a dark, gloomy street.

*The *Erl King* dates from this year. It is one of the 146 songs of 1815. Remember always that at this time Schubert was a school-teacher.

It and the furniture were the worse for wear ; the ceiling of the room bulged ; a huge building opposite obstructed the light. There was a worn-out piano and a shabby bookcase. Such was the room. I shall never forget the hours we spent there. A depth of sentiment, a mutual love for poetry and music, these drew us closer and closer together. I wrote verses. Schubert saw what I wrote. Many of his melodies owe their beginning, end, and popularity in the world to these joint efforts of ours."

More truly Mayrhofer might have said that to their joint efforts he was to owe his subsequent fame.

It was in the winter of 1814-1815 these two artists met, two absolute opposites. Schubert's mind (apart from brief hours of depression) was like Mozart's music, and we can fancy he describes it for us when, in his diary of 1816, he writes thus of his chiefly beloved musician :

This day will haunt me for the rest of my life, as a bright, clear, and lovely one. Gently, and as from a distance, the magic tones of Mozart's music sound in my ears. . . . Thus do these sweet impressions, passing into our souls, work beneficently on our inmost being, and neither time nor change of circumstance can obliterate them. In the darkness of life

they show a light—a clear and lovely vista, from which we receive hope and confidence. O Mozart, immortal Mozart, what countless images of a brighter world hast thou stamped on our souls !

Vogl and Schubert became acquainted by the instrumentality of Mayrhofer and Franz von Schober, a young enthusiast with whom the composer lived for a time under conditions that were lively : school teaching was abandoned, and the pair managed as best they could.

The singer was taken by Schober to see Franz Peter, who received the visitor " with incoherent stammering speech and shuffling gait." Vogl neither shuffled nor stammered. He was quite at ease, being a performer of assured position. He liked the young man's songs, and sang them abroad, bringing repute to the composer, and enabling the latter to sell quite a number of them to publishers at about a shilling a time. But Vogl made alterations in Schubert's music in order to heighten their effectiveness from the point of view of a performer ; until the composer forgot to stammer and insisted on such tampering coming to an end. Yet some of Vogl's clumsy changes passed into print.

These were proper Bohemian years. Added to the friends already mentioned were two brothers, Anselm Hüttenbrenner and Joseph Hüttenbrenner ; a pianist, Gahy ; and a well-to-

do burgher family, the Sonnleithners. The last-named opened their house to Schubert, and soon they gave musical entertainments in the home which, after a while, took the definite title of *Schubertiaden*.

Schubert had practically no money at all; he taught nothing, could not play in public, and as yet was receiving nothing for his compositions: but these friends helped him—one with a room, another with food, and a third with music-paper, pens, and ink; and they took meals together in the inns, or had food sent in, and the member of the party who happened to be in funds that day paid the bill.

The first group of these Bohemian years lasted up to 1818, when Schubert arrived at the estate of manhood.

Two events mark 1818, one the public performance of an overture written to mock the style of Rossini, whose music was then the rage in Vienna as elsewhere, the other an appointment as music-master in the household of Count Johann Esterhazy. The latter took him for the summer and autumn into Hungary. It was in the following winter (1818-1819) that Schubert and Mayrhofer began to live together.

Let us sit for a moment with Ferdinand, and read a few sentences from a letter arrived from Franz, now away at Zelész in Hungary. Ferdinand, by the by, was a clever and earnest man, a teacher who in the course of his life filled some

important offices, and a gifted musician. He was older than Franz, but lived thirty-one years longer, dying in 1859. Among his compositions are two requiems, the first of which he was writing in 1818, while Franz was away in Hungary earning his 35s. a week (with board) in the house of Count Esterhazy. An unusually warm love existed between the two brothers.

The letter was written on August 24th-25th. It was first published by Sir George Grove in his great Dictionary of Music, having been given to him by a granddaughter of Ferdinand.

Dear Brother Ferdinand,

It is half-past eleven at night, and your Requiem is ready. It has made me sorrowful, as you may believe, for I sang it with all my heart. What is wanting you can fill in, and put the words under the music and the signs above. And if you want much rehearsal you must do it yourself, without asking me in Zelész.

Things are not going well with you: I wish you could change with me, so that for once you might be happy. You should find all your heavy burdens gone, dear brother. I heartily wish it could be so.

My foot is asleep, and I am mad with it: if the fool could only write it wouldn't go to sleep!

Good morning, my boy! I have been

asleep along with my foot, and now go on with my letter at eight o'clock on the 25th.

I have one request to make in answer to yours. Give my love to my dear parents, brothers, sisters, friends, and acquaintances, especially not forgetting Carl. . . . As for my friends in the town, bully them, or get some one to bully them well, till they write to me. Tell my mother that my linen is well looked after, and that I am well off, thanks to her motherly care. If I could have some more linen, I should very much like her to send me a second batch of pocket-handkerchiefs, cravats, and stockings. Also I am much in want of two pair of kerseymere trousers. Hart can get the measure wherever he likes. I would send the money very soon. For July, with the journey-money, I got two hundred florins. . . .

Though I am so well and happy, and everyone so good to me, yet I shall be immensely glad when the moment arrives for going to Vienna. Beloved Vienna, all that is dear and valuable to me is there, and nothing but the actual sight of it will stop my longing! Again entreating you to attend to all my requests, I remain, with much love to all, your true and sincere

FRANZ MPIA.

It is his stepmother to whom Franz refers. She was fond of the children of the first marriage,

and evidently looked after Franz as well as he would let her in the days of his Bohemian life in the city.

He wanted the cravats and the stockings and the kerseymere trousers for two reasons, one that the period of Count Esterhazy's stay in Hungary was to be longer than first arranged, and the other that Franz found he used up more changes of clothes while living in a nobleman's family than when among his careless Viennese companions.

He was glad to get back, and to doff best behaviour. They say he let out a wild shriek of liberty the moment he got to the room he and Mayrhofer were to live in; where, as relief from writing music, he and the rest organized sham fights, howling contests, and similar ebullitions —much to the pleasure and comfort of the neighbours, *I don't think!* as Sam Weller (who was living at the same time in London) used to remark.

In the summer of 1819 Schubert went with Vogl into Upper Austria for a holiday. The singer had a number of friends in Styria, mostly in the town of Steyr. One was a well-to-do bachelor named Silvester Paumgartner—an enthusiastic amateur, who loved to have good musicians around him, and who was constantly buying books and musical compositions: this man was happy to help any musician of ability, and he was proud to become acquainted with young Schubert.

Another was Josef von Koller, whose pretty daughter, it seems, Vogl was on the way to loving.

In the house where Schubert lodged while in Steyn lived Albert Schellmann with five daughters, and a public official with three daughters. Franz said in a letter to Ferdinand :

> In the house where I am lodging there are eight young ladies, and nearly all pretty. So you see one has plenty to do. Vogl and I dine every day with Herr von Koller: his daughter is uncommonly pretty, plays the piano capitally, and sings several of my songs.

There was plenty of music-making among these people, and Schubert had a good time, first with the girls (nearly all of them pretty), then with the generous, open-house manner of the friends he made, thirdly with the vigorous and varied performances that took place every afternoon and evening, and lastly with the delightful district that surrounded the town: hitherto Schubert had seen only the country round Vienna and the part of Hungary where Count Esterhazy had his summer house ; and the mountainous character of this part of Austria was grateful to him.

The quintet known as *Die Forelle* was written during this holiday, and of course a number of other works.

The two men went into other towns, but they finished the holiday with a second stay in Steyr,

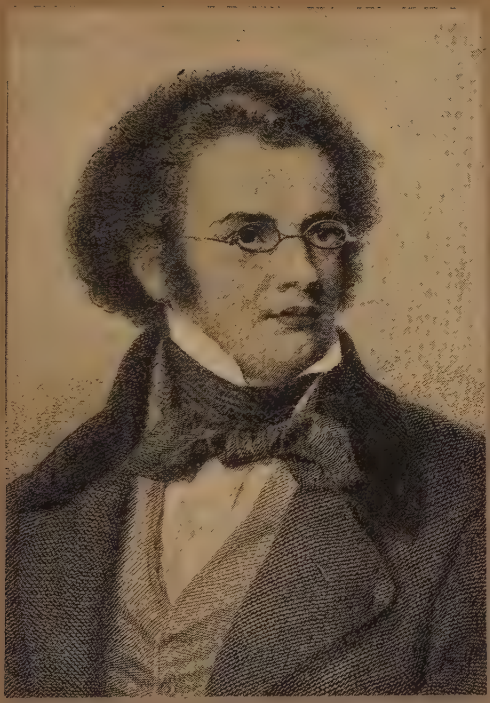
after which they returned to Vienna and their free, reckless life. The following passage from a letter to Mayrhofer is pleasant reading :

> I recommend to your notice the bearer of this letter, a student of Kremsmünster, Kahl by name: he is journeying to Idria by way of Vienna, on a visit to his parents. Please let him have my bed during the time he stays with you. I am anxious you should treat him as kindly as possible, for he is a dear good fellow.

Within a year or so of the Styrian holiday Schubert began to be better known in Vienna. He had two works produced in the theatres of the city, neither a success because of the stupid subjects, and several eminent men wrote " testimonials " recommending him to the recognition of opera and concert directors.

He was, however, hindered by his Bohemianism ; he was known to be one of a wild lot of young fellows, and even in Vienna such peculiarity of manner and recklessness of conduct were not tolerated except in an artist who had arrived at success. And as he was utterly impatient of the most elementary restraint, the Viennese social and artistic circles would have nothing to do with him.

The neglect of Schubert, and his miserable death, were his own fault: it is only sentimentalists who cry out against the city that let him die a



SCHUBERT

pauper. And perhaps Schubert himself was chiefly the cause of his early death.

But he did no harm to others; he was a generous and loving man, with a soul so gentle, passionate, and sensitive that—being expressed as it is in vast supplies of music—his life made the world a different place for all music-lovers who come after him: we have, by Schubert, a kind of beauty now around us which but for him we never should have had, because since music began there has been none just like him. Schubert failed in duty to himself, and he paid the penalty; he did not fail in duty to things and persons other than himself.

The Sonnleithners (as already implied) were exceptions among the important Viennese. The head of the family, Dr. Sonnleithner, was a lawyer; his position in artistic and intellectual circles was sound, and his private concerts (weekly in the summer, and fortnightly in the winter) became so well-known that practically all the real music-lovers of Vienna tried to get invitations.

The concerts lasted for nine years—1815 to 1824. Schubert's music was regularly played at them, and Dr. Sonnleithner sought all opportunities to help the composer. Thus he induced singers to use his songs in public, and even took a share in the cost of privately printing the *Erl-King*. But Schubert would not do anything to help in the stabilizing of his musical reputation;

business was abhorrent, and it was as complex and delicate a matter to get him to rehearsals as it is to organize the running of a special train through a busy railway district.

A few other families were friendly; yet Schubert was too shy—too diffident in polite company, to feel comfortable with them. And so he clung closer and closer to the body of artists, philosophers, poets, and musicians of which he was the most gifted member, and filled his hours of recreation with rollicking picnics, impromptu dance parties, and jolly hours in the consumption of the liquids that inebriate as well as cheer.

III

Space here makes it impossible to follow further the records of the rest of Franz Schubert's life. The reader must turn to larger books for an account of his deeds, experiences, and compositions. He will find there the story of the gradual public acceptance of his music, and particularly the great success of his songs, one of which, the *Wanderer*, sold by Schubert for a small sum, brought in a thousand pounds profit to the publisher within a year of its publication. By 1823, that is, by the time Schubert was twenty-six, he was widely known throughout Austria and Germany, and a little worldly wisdom on his part might have made him a well-to-do man.

The story of his last few years is even more interesting than the story of his earlier life; and of greater interest still is the story of the growth of his posthumous fame—of Schumann's generous propaganda, and of the researches in Austria (forty years after the composer's death) carried on by George Grove and Arthur Sullivan. Equally interesting, though perhaps so only to the advanced student of musical history, is the record of the publication of Schubert's manuscripts and the public production of the works: the publication extended over more than fifty years, until people almost refused to believe the matter was genuine. Many of his compositions have not made good, and they never will make good, for reasons we understand the moment we realize that form in art must be strong before the art-work can have permanent vitality; but others of them have made good, among which are several that are guaranteed as long a life as any music created in the nineteenth century—chief among these the *Unfinished* symphony in B minor.

The symphony in C major, after being laughed at during rehearsal by the Philharmonic Orchestra in 1844, and withdrawn therefore in disgust by Mendelssohn, the conductor, eventually became popular in London; so much so that it was apparently played once every season at the Crystal Palace concerts under August Manns.

It was in 1857 that Manns first introduced the

work into his programmes: for a generation the music went on moulding the minds of the Crystal Palace audience, until the people knew it as they know *The Messiah*. A concert fell on the anniversary of Schubert's death in the year 1887 (November 19th); Manns played the symphony, and he and the work received on that special occasion an approval which contemporary writers called rapturous—so loved was the work, and so finely had it taught the age to regard the composer as a living and present friend.

We do not use this symphony so much to-day, first because of its great length, and secondly because the general mood of our generation does not agree with its eternal leisure: moreover, the short B minor symphony is so popular that it stands in the way of the C major. Young musicians, however, should learn the longer work; apart from its beauty, it has the power to teach the art of long and constructive listening—that is, *symphonic* listening, which we do not always develop. The symphony plays well on the pianola, except that the slow movement, where (as Schumann says) the instruments seem to speak with human voices, naturally loses character when taken from the orchestra.

During the nineteenth century Schubert's operas were occasionally revived, as his *Der hausliche Krieg* at the Hof-Theatre in Munich in the first part of the year 1887; but though the contemporary reports generally say the revivals

are attended with "much success," they never become permanent.

IV

Franz Peter began to suffer in health by the time he was thirty. He had turns of giddiness, due to pressure of blood in the brain. For years he had worked exceedingly hard, and he had neglected the laws of health. Now he tried to put matters right by careful eating, more regular hours of work and exercise, and by change of occupation. It was too late, however. Yet he did not think he was going to die, and not only planned other compositions, but actually determined to take up a study of such departments of music as Strict Counterpoint, feeling (it is said after reading some of Handel's music) that his works suffered through his ignorance of the pure, classical manner of writing.

It was early in November, 1828, that Schubert decided he must enter on a course of intellectual study. On the 4th day of the month he called on Simon Sechter (1788-1867), the great teacher of musical theory, and fixed upon the dates for the lessons he wanted to take.

But the illness that had come on him grew rapidly worse. By the 11th of the month he was very ill. Three days later he was too weak to leave his bed. On the 17th he became

delirious, typhus fever having supervened. Ferdinand was with him constantly, but we understand that all his Bohemian friends—the singers, musicians, painters, poets, and even the philosophers, shunned him for the plague that had descended upon him. On the 19th he died. His place of burial is a few yards from Beethoven's grave.

They gave him the best funeral they could manage. Ferdinand and his father were heart-broken over their loss. Writing to Ferdinand on the day Franz died, the father said :

> Take every possible precaution that our dear Franz have administered to him at once the Holy Sacraments administered to the dying, and I live in the cheerful hope that the Almighty will strengthen and preserve him.—Thy father, afflicted, yet strengthened by trust in God.
>
> FRANZ.

And Ferdinand, writing to his father about the funeral and about Franz Peter's great desire to be buried near Beethoven, wrote :

> I have ascertained the cost of removing the body: it will amount to about seventy florins (*three pounds*)—a large sum, a very large sum, but little enough for the honour of Franz's resting-place. For my part, I can spare temporarily the sum of forty florins (*thirty-three*

shillings), for yesterday fifty were paid to me. For the rest, I believe we may expect that all the expenses incidental to his illness and burial will be met by what he has left.

These were the worldly goods owned by Schubert when he died : three dress coats; three walking coats; ten pairs of trousers; nine waistcoats: value 31s. One hat; five pairs of shoes; two pairs of boots: value 2s. Four shirts, nine cravats and handkerchiefs; thirteen pairs of socks; one towel; one sheet; two bed-cases: value 7s. 6d. One mattress; one bolster; one quilt: value 5s. A quantity of old music valued at 8s. 6d. Sixty-three florins in all.

That is, a little less than two and a half guineas of our modern English money.

Among the " quantity of old music " were his copies of published works by himself and other composers; and the manuscripts of all the other works of his which were not published but remained in his own hands.

I copy now Schubert's last letter, written on the 11th of November :

Dear Schober,

I am ill. I have eaten and drunk nothing for eleven days, and am so tired and shaky that I can only get from the bed to the chair and back. Rinna is attending me. If I taste anything I am sick directly. In this distressing

condition be so kind as to help me to some reading. Of Fenimore Cooper's I have read "The Last of the Mohicans," the "Pilot," and the "Pioneers." If you have anything else of his I entreat you to leave it with Frau von Bognor, at the coffee-house. My brother, who is conscientiousness itself, will bring it to me in the most conscientious way. Or anything else. Your friend,

SCHUBERT.

There is one saddest of all elements in this letter. It is that Franz does not ask Schober to bring the books to him, but to leave them at the coffee-house. The desertion was complete, and the sick man knew it.

X. WEBER

What love is to man, music is to the arts and to mankind.

Music is love itself—it is the purest, most ethereal language of passion, showing in a thousand ways all possible changes of colour and feeling; and though true in only a single instance, it can yet be understood by thousands of men, who all feel differently.—WEBER.

And lo! the Briton may yield thee justice, the Frenchman admiration; but the German alone can love thee. His thou art; a beauteous day amid his life, a warm drop of his own blood, a morsel of his heart.—WAGNER (1844).

X. WEBER

I

THERE are poets and musicians known to a later generation by one or two works only. They may have been prolific, and in their lifetime their works may have been largely used in the mass. Their names may be constantly on the lips of the later generation. Yet the modest selection continues, and of perhaps a hundred works not more than one is wanted.

Weber is of this class. We mention him continually in essays on music. He looms as distinct as Schubert, Schumann, Chopin, and Brahms, and perhaps historically he is more significant than any of those four. His creative output was large :

28 miscellaneous dramatic works (*incidental music to plays, scenas, etc.*).
9 operas.
8 cantatas.
2 masses.
90 songs, ballads, and romances.
19 part-songs for male voices.
24 other vocal pieces.
10 overtures, symphonies, and miscellaneous orchestral works, additional to the overtures to the operas.
16 works for solo instrument and orchestra.
4 piano sonatas, and a mass of other piano music.

Many works for piano and another instrument (e.g., violin).

In all, more than three hundred works, ranging from grand opera to songs and variations.

But we retain in regular use little more than the following :

The overtures to the operas *Der Freischütz* (1820), *Euryanthe* (1823), *Oberon* (1826).
The overture to *Preciosa* (1820).
The *Jubel-Cantata* (1818)—this in England in the form of a harvest-cantata, which makes the music absurd.
Some of the *Leyer und Schwert* songs and part-songs.
The " Concert-piece " for piano and orchestra (1821).
One or two movements from the piano sonatas.
The *Invitation to the Dance.*

The overtures to the operas, however, we use as frequently as the Beethoven symphonies; and by the beauty of these works Weber is maintained as one of the most popular of composers.

It would not be hard to explain why Weber's music is not widely used apart from a few overtures.

The dramatic and vocal music belongs, for the most part, to a transitional epoch, namely the temporary " romanticism " of the first quarter of

the nineteenth century, and so is as foreign to us as is the romantic poetry of Thomas Moore.

The poetic music is more thoroughly Teutonic, and therefore more local in appeal, than is the case with the works of any other great German composer. The instrumental music is not strong of form, and its substance is not individual: it is, in fact, for the most part weak, always excepting the magnificent *Aufforderung zum Tanze* ("Invitation to the Dance").

Weber was a pioneer. He was first in a new country; and the man first to open a new land rarely builds monuments there. The country he opened was that wherein Wagner was to build.

Permanent works of art grow like the oak, which is from within; but Weber gathered from without, taking external ideas and subjects, and decorating those with beautiful music. He worked, not by the processes of logical thought, but by emotional or impressional impulses.

The pianola has introduced Weber's pianoforte music to us afresh, as it has re-introduced the music of several other composers; and to-day we receive pleasure, without effort or long expenditure of time, from the sonatas and variations.

II

The Webers (*von* or otherwise) were a family of some considerable musicianship. Those of the

generation of the father of Mozart were instrumentalists, chiefly violinists.

Fridolin, one of two brothers, had four daughters, all good singers, of whom Constance was the girl Mozart married. It was Fridolin who dropped the title from the name.

The other brother, Franz Anton, born in 1734, played violin, viola, and double-bass : he had been a soldier, and for a while steward to a nobleman; but he was an unstable, thriftless, lazy fellow, self-indulgent, who lost his post and settled into a sponger upon his wife, a woman with some slight material possessions.

At the age of thirty-nine, Franz Anton decided to become a professional musician, though only a fair amateur in the art. He gave concerts, was music director of a theatre at Lübeck, and acted as capellmeister to the Prince-Bishop of Eutin.

But he was eccentric, and too volatile to do any good. His wife died in 1779, worn out and crushed by life with a clever vagabond. She left behind her children of some showy musical ability.

In 1785 this man married again—now a young girl who worked as a public singer. Their child Carl became the great composer of opera. The family now for a time toured the country in a troupe, giving concerts and singing in theatres.

Carl was brought up in the theatre ; the spirit of the footlights was absorbed among his

earliest impressions: this was good eventually for his art, but bad for his health, because he was first of a delicate, sensitive nature, and secondly of a not very strong physical constitution—indeed, he had a consumptive tendency, and one of his hips was threatened with disease.

Franz Anton had pursued several chimeras. One of these was the desire to own a child prodigy like the child of Leopold Mozart, who should bring him fame and fortune. Seeing signs of genius in Carl, he guessed that one of the chimeras was to prove a reality; and so he worked the child for what he was worth. This likewise was bad for Carl.

The boy could not walk before the end of his fourth year, but he was taught the elements of piano playing before then. And he was shown how to sing more carefully than how to speak.

At the age of nine Carl became acquainted with Johann Peter Heuschkel (1773-1853), a musician of good type, and so the opposite of Carl's father. Heuschkel was a master of the science of composition, a fair creative musician, an organist, an excellent pianist of the new school of clavier players, and a famous oboist. He was also a born teacher, enthusiastic, and warm with all the life of a man of twenty-two.

Here was good fortune for a clever boy, to meet a capable friend and instructor—fortune so great that it could be bettered only by the other fortune of a long acquaintance. Carl worked hard, at

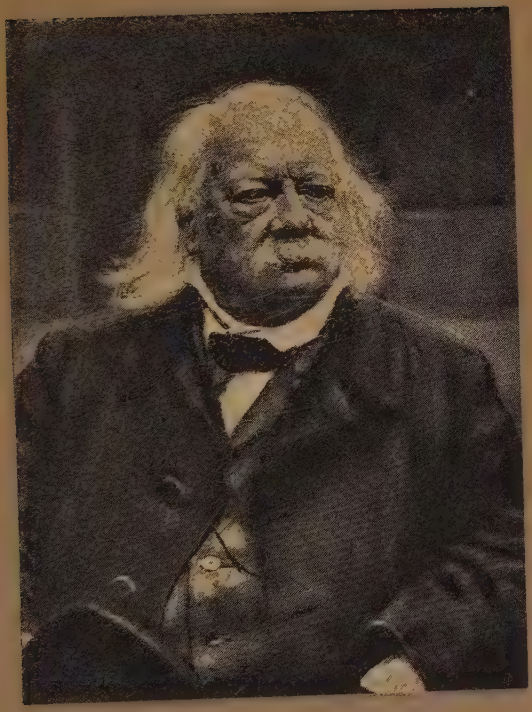
the driest of dry studies in whatever subject he took up under Heuschkel; and he made progress that startled his father and still more materialized that chimera. Weber eventually became an exceptional pianist, and he always said it was from this young man that he was put safely on the right road.

But Carl was one of a troupe of wandering musical entertainers, and he and Heuschkel were not together many months.

In 1797 or 1798 the family were for a while in Salzburg, where Carl sang in the Cathedral choir and was helped by Michael Haydn, who gave him free lessons. Fifty years stood between Carl and his new teacher, however. Yet the pupil wrote some little pieces of strict music called fughettas, and these the father had printed —the first proud proof to the as-yet-unconquered public that here was the second Mozart child-wonder. (Parents for thirty years after the childhood of Mozart were trying to find another Mozart.)

Now the father gave up his concerts and work in theatres; his wife, Carl's mother, conveniently died, removing the nuisance of a sick woman; he assumed the title of Major; and began to push Carl forward as a public pianist, making him likewise compose music incessantly.

Of course, Salzburg was soon left. They went to Munich, where the boy studied with an organist named Kalcher, under whom he wrote



A. WEBER

an opera, some instrumental music, and a mass: this music was afterwards destroyed. The variations for piano, Opus 2, belong to this period.

Freiberg, in Saxony, was the home of the von Webers in 1800. Here, while not yet fourteen, Carl wrote the music for the opera *Das Waldmadchen*, a piece that was unsuccessful. Yet it did well later in other towns, among these Vienna, where it was given several times in the winter of 1805.

Salzburg was their home again in 1801, and Michael Haydn again the teacher. Here Carl composed the opera *Peter Schmoll.* The overture is sometimes played now; it makes an interesting piece on the organ.

Vienna was their home in 1803, and Abt Vogler* the teacher—the man named in Browning's poem, but not the soul revealed there. Here Carl von Weber stayed only a little time, because Breslau became the home of the family, Carl having been appointed conductor of the opera there.

Carl did not live a good life, despite the example of his father. He got into debt, was wild, and once nearly killed himself by drinking nitric acid in mistake for some other liquid. By that accident he ruined his beautiful singing voice. Of the work done in Breslau, the overture *Der Beherrscher der Geister* (rewritten in 1811) is one of Weber's finest works for orchestra.

* See *Favourite Musical Performers*, page 218.

Stuttgart was their home in 1806, Carl having been made private secretary to a nobleman. Naturally he continued working hard at music, and some of his various works date from Stuttgart; but trouble ensued over the Major—Carl and his father were actually put in prison, and though Carl's innocence was proved, they were banished the country. This was in February, 1810.

They moved to Mannheim. Carl settled the Major comfortably in Mannheim, and then went to Darmstadt, to be near Vogler and to be with his friend Gänsbacher, whom he loved in the richly sentimental manner of the young romantic Germans of those days.

To be away from his father was also his desire, because the experience at Stuttgart had shocked him. Henceforth he was the earnest and ambitious artist, with a noble aim influencing the years he had to live. Those years numbered only sixteen.

III

The first six of the sixteen years of life left to Weber divide into equal portions. Years i-iii were a period of concert-wandering; years iv-vi were a period of settled labour at Prague.

The concert-period carried Weber over South, Central, and Northern Germany, with an interval in Switzerland. He met many of the musicians of the time, with some of whom he associated

himself in the public performance of music. One of these was Heinrich Bärmann (1784-1847), the great player of the clarinet, for whom Weber wrote his concertos. Some performances of his operatic works took place in various towns, and the light comic opera called *Abu Hassan* was produced in 1811.

In 1812 the father died.

The three years at Prague (1813-1816) were the first secure years of Carl Maria von Weber's life. Here he was capellmeister, and also director of the opera house, which last he thoroughly re-organized and brought to a high order of efficiency.

Europe was in a ferment early in this period: the composer's sensitive nature reacted to the great patriotic movements, and early in the Prague period he wrote his war songs, among them the famous settings of Körner's *Leyer und Schwert*, of which the song "Lützow's wilde Jagd" is almost an historic document. This song went the length and breadth of Germany almost in a moment, and close upon the event it celebrated.

From Prague Weber went in 1816 to Dresden, where the King of Saxony had appointed him master of the German opera. The Italian opera was in the hands of Francesco Morlacchi (1784-1841), who was jealous of the newcomer and a cause of trouble to him. But the king made the men equal, and Weber was free to exercise the

genius he had for organization, control, and execution.

In 1817 *Der Freischütz* was begun, but not finished until 1820—for reasons which, when detailed, bring in the names of Morlacchi, of jealous courtiers, intriguing servants, and a king prejudiced for a time by the lies of interested persons. The opera *Preciosa* was also written in this period, being completed in 1820.

As matters were not pleasant in Dresden, *Der Freischütz* was produced in Berlin. The work was magnificently successful (June 18th, 1821). The success was repeated in Vienna (October 3rd, 1821). Therefore the opera came to Dresden in due course, and was again successful (January 26th, 1822).

The remainder of Weber's life is the story of the grand romantic opera *Euryanthe* (Vienna, 1823), and the opera *Oberon* (London, 1826). He was ill in these years. In the first phase of his life at Dresden he had at last put a final end to all irregularities of life, and had married a pure, noble-minded woman, Carolina Brandt: his life, therefore, was at last serene in this vital direction; but nothing could recover strength that, after all, never was or could have been his ; and Carl died in London on the fifth of June, 1826, a few weeks after the great triumph of *Oberon*.*

His life had been very hard. Almost every condition and circumstance during its first thirty

* See *Makers of Music* ("Braham").

years had been wrong. The father was an entirely bad man, because selfish. The mother soon became weakly, and for a long while was ill. The people surrounding Carl in his childhood were, for the most part, free-living, happy-go-lucky men and women. The continuous wanderings of the family made for intellectual interests that were of but a shallow, shifting character. Excitement took the place of calm enthusiasm, and often the excitement developed into a false gaiety. Childhood and youth were not instructed, and early maturity was not afforded that leisure for contemplation and reflection which the creative musician needs if he is to make music of the best kind.

When Weber was a grown man, free of his father and placed in a sound official position, he was still kept in the hectic world of the theatre, and moreover surrounded by the petty jealousies of self-seeking, common-minded individuals. He was never strong, and through all the years of his perfected genius he was declining more and more into that illness which was to kill him at the age of forty.

Altogether, Carl Maria von Weber's life seems to be the saddest recorded in musical history.

IV

It does not surprise us to learn that this man was of rather melancholy nature. Some of his

melancholy was the manner of the period: young people, especially in Germany, were inclined to pose as mysteriously unfortunate folk, in the opening years of the new, "romantic" period which followed the "classical" period; they analysed themselves and their conditions, and naturally found a good deal to pity.

But the greater part of Weber's melancholy was native to his character. He was emotional, not reflective; impressionable, never logical: therefore he was at the mercy of his moods, and very largely under the control of external influences. Such men as he are bound to become melancholic—in their hours of reaction they cannot help being despondent.

His letters more often than not are about himself and his work. They describe at length the troubles and hindrances that crowded his path, and seem to imply that he considered himself the toy or football of a specially malevolent fate: every creative artist the world has known has had these troubles; but Weber seems to have thought that he was, in this respect, unique.

He was modest enough, and indulged in no self-glorification; indeed, he was the true artist who thought constantly of his art, having for his art the anxious pride a parent has for a child: yet he had no broad philosophic culture, and so could not see his art calmly, in proper comparative relation to the rest of the world. That is to say, he was over-centred in the one subject of his

work, and saw it in disproportion. Such a condition always makes for despondency, because it magnifies trifles.

Carl had an affectionate disposition. A loving spirit maintained itself all through his life between himself and some friends. He loved his native country, even more than the German generally loves the Fatherland, and it must have intensified the gloom and agitation of his last weeks to know he must die in a foreign land.

Of course, when in despondent mood he fancied that love and friendship were false; and he made a fatal self-exposure when he wrote (January 18th, 1811),* *I adore woman; and yet I hate and despise her!*

But a line of true and beautiful friendship can be traced throughout his life, which those of us who think contemplatively of Weber keep in the forefront of our minds. We also keep constantly in our minds some of the finer phrases contained in the document just quoted from, finding therein an explanation (and thus a justification) of much that is ambiguous in his life, character, and music:

> My path in life was, from my birth, cast in lines different from those of any other human being. I have no happy days of childhood on which to look back, no boyhood free and open. I am young; but old in experience. I have

* Or on January 12th.

learnt everything by myself and through my own feelings, never by the aid of other men. Crushed by struggling against adverse circumstance, I have yet attained so much apparent calmness that few are likely to discover—under my cheerful, yes, even gay, exterior—the grief that consumes me, both body and soul. . . . Misery is the lot of man. Never attaining perfection, always discontented, always at war with himself, he is Yearning personified. Unstable, yet ever moving, without strength, will, or power to rest; and the fleeting impressions on his mind vanish as soon as they are made.

Musicians like Weber do not know a good deal of other music, and they are not particularly responsive to other types. Weber himself knew little Bach. He admired Cherubini. Mozart he adored, especially as a man. Beethoven did not move him for a long while; even at the age of twenty-five he considered that Beethoven arranged his ideas in a confused manner—that is, that his music was not clear and that his architecture was faulty. He lacked the historical sense; and so, in his music as in his life, he had to do all his learning for himself. This in the end was good, because it enabled him to be quite different from all earlier composers, and to establish that new kind of music which was to grow to perfection with Wagner.

WEBER

We are fortunate in having a good picture of Weber at the end of his life. The writer who affords us this picture was a clever journalist who had to report the Oratorio Concert on March 8th, 1826, which included a selection from *Der Freischütz*. The concert preceded by a month the production of *Oberon*.

The report says :

"On Wednesday a crowded audience assembled to see this popular composer, it being understood that he was to preside during the first part of the Oratorio. At an early hour the boxes were well filled, and every seat in the pit was occupied. Three or four rounds of the most enthusiastic approbation greeted M. Weber on his entrance. He did not preside at the pianoforte, as was reported he intended to do, but merely stood in the front of the stage, provided with a music-desk, and a *baton de mesure*, to regulate the time of the performances—a task which he performed with extraordinary earnestness.

"M. Weber is, in person, rather above the middle height, extremely thin, and of dark complexion. His countenance, which is striking and intelligent, appears to bear traces of profound study, rather than of vivid imagination; but he wore glasses, which tended to conceal the expression of his eyes. His de-

portment is gentlemanly, and remarkably unassuming.

"The first part of the Oratorio consisted of a selection of the most admired pieces of his own *Freischütz*, commencing with the overture, which was enthusiastically encored.

"At the conclusion of the overture, and at the close of several of the pieces, M. Weber bowed in acknowledgment of his thanks to the performers, apparently anxious to transfer to them a portion of the vehement approbation which was so lavishly directed to himself. M. von Weber seemed to be much affected by the applause of which he was the object, but he showed no disposition to obtrude himself; on the contrary, he appeared rather to shrink from the notice of the audience."

Weber was buried in the graveyard at Moorfields Chapel. There his body lay for eighteen years, when it was removed to Dresden. Wagner delivered a famous oration on the occasion of this second interment, in which he declared Weber the most German of all composers.

XI. MENDELSSOHN

. . . Ich nenne den den Glücklichsten,
Der ohne Kummer der Welt Erhabenheit geschaut
Und eilig dann zurückgekehrt, von wo er kam;
Die Sonne, die allen leuchtet, Sterne, Feuer, Meer,
Der Wolken Zug—und wenn du hundert Jahre lebst,
Nichts andres siehst du, als in wenigen Jahren auch.
Erhab'neres aber schaut des Menschen Auge nie.

MENANDER.

XI. MENDELSSOHN

The three great men of the first quarter of the nineteenth century died within a couple of years of each other—Weber in 1826, Beethoven in 1827, and Schubert in 1828. Cherubini lived on, and Berlioz was well into his manhood; but apart from these two—Cherubini "classical," Berlioz "romantic"—all the composers next to become great figures in history were but youths in those three years.

There are four of these great men—five, if Liszt be great. They were born within the space of four years—Felix Mendelssohn in 1809, François Frédéric Chopin in 1809, Robert Alexander Schumann in 1810, Franz Liszt in 1811, and William Richard Wagner in 1813.

Naturally there was a gap in the production of great music when Weber, Beethoven, and Schubert died.

By the year 1837, ten years after the passing of Beethoven, Mendelssohn was hardly entered upon his best period; Berlioz was still writing his works of the monstrous kind; and the figures that filled the eye of the world were chiefly Louis Spohr (1784-1859), the violinist, conductor, and composer; Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868), the opera composer (who did no work after he was forty-five); Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791-1864); and Daniel Auber (1782-1871), these last two composers of opera.

Spohr, Rossini, Meyerbeer, and Auber, and likewise Vincenzo Bellini (1801-1835) and

Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848), two popular masters of Italian opera, were not great in the way of Chopin, Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Wagner; and so this gap between the classical period and the romantic remains a gap to this day: we use little of the music of those minor men, and what we do hear sounds old-fashioned. But the gap contains the miraculous early pieces of Mendelssohn, as the *Midsummer Night's Dream* overture.

Art that is old-fashioned is not true art, and the circumstance that it has become so is proof of its inferiority. Art may become ancient, and even archaic, and yet remain vital. To be old-fashioned is to become faded; and things of vitality never fade, however the "dust of mortality may soil their raiment," as Hafiz phrases it.

I

Felix Mendelssohn belonged to a family famous in two or three directions. He was as the musical star in a heaven holding other stars of intellect, superb idealism, wealth, honesty, and social power.

In this respect Felix (happily named) differs from other great musicians. No master-composer but he was surrounded by worldly comfort; few, indeed, were not companioned by poverty, and even by hardship and danger. No other

was brought up in a home marked by the finest intellectual spirit of the generation. Poverty of mind, equal to material poverty, often attended the childhood of the master-composers; though generally there was some wealth of religious idealism or of personal nobility and sincerity in their immediate ancestors.

Felix Mendelssohn is unique in that he is a great creative artist sprung of a wealthy and famous family.

But the fame and wealth of the family did not extend backward over more than a half-century. The great-grandfather was a poor scribe—Mendel Dessau, a writer of scrolls. This Mendel's son, Moses, named later Moses Mendelssohn, was a boy of no physical strength, being indeed deformed by a curvature of the spine. He was born in 1729, into extreme poverty; but when, in 1786, he died, it was in a fame so great that he was regarded as the eighteenth-century equivalent of the Moses who led the Jews out of Egypt.

This Moses had an intellect of the clearest quality. His thirst for knowledge was unquenchable. His moral courage was perfect. In an age which, being materialistic in philosophy, denied religion, and denied in particular the spiritual qualities of man, he argued that the soul existed, and that the soul was immortal: so that before Moses Mendelssohn reached the age of forty, he was named the German Socrates, or the German Plato.

He then became the first great worker for the emancipation of the Jews in Europe. The Jews at that time were in a state of social degradation. They were not respected, and by reason of their ignorance and meanness they were not deserving of respect. But by personal example and ceaseless work Moses awoke ambition in them and compelled the non-Jewish world to look on them with different eyes; until a beginning was made in their emancipation, and he himself was named now the Luther of the Jews. It was in Berlin that he carried out his work, where—as the capital of Prussia—the Jews were in a particularly low state.

Moses taught religious toleration, declaring that there was no religion absolutely and exclusively true. His philosophy strengthened Judaism; but its application in the life of his own family resulted in most of the members leaving the Synagogue for the Church. Thus his grandson Felix, by descent a pure Jew, belonged to the reformed Christian faith, and was a sincere Christian.

When in 1909 the centenary of the birth of Felix was celebrated, interest was revived in the work and personality of Moses, and many articles and essays appeared in newspapers and periodicals.* His books are still read, though his work

*Moses Mendelssohn was a friend of Lessing. The latter took Moses as the model of the Jew in his "Nathan the Wise." A hundred and more years later, namely, in 1888, the Anti-

lives rather in the general world of men than in literature. The popularity of his books is due to the fine clarity of the author's style and to the beauty of his expression—qualities which were repeated in the music of Felix.

Moses had three sons and three daughters. The latter were women of brilliant gifts. The eldest son, Joseph, founded the Mendelssohn banking house. The youngest, Nathan, was a mechanical engineer.

The second son, Abraham, was a banker and a man of most admirable character—cultured, liberal, firm in a gentle manner, a delightful humorist, and the perfect father for his son Felix. His wife was named Leah Bartholdy, which explains why the composer is known as (Jakob Ludwig Felix) *Mendelssohn-Bartholdy*.

Abraham used to say, "Formerly I was the son of my father: now I am the father of my son." He also used to say, "I tease myself that I stand as it were like a hyphen between my father Moses and my son Felix." He went through life in a cool, matter-of-fact manner; Felix went through life in a mood of most lively enthusiasm: the two sometimes travelled together, and it is delightful to read their letters side by side. The son loved even the London fogs; but the father wrote:

This morning, at 14 minutes past 9, the sun

Semitic party in Germany proposed (seriously) that the plays of Lessing should be boycotted because of these two facts.

was just powerful enough to give a yellow tinge to the fog. 'A very fine morning,' said the barber to me. 'Is it?' I asked; and so I learnt what is meant here by a fine summer's morning. Felix is playing the organ at St. Paul's, but I cannot make up my mind to leave this room: when he comes back he will, no doubt, declare that nowhere are there such beautiful summer days as in London.

II

Felix and his sister Fanny were born in Hamburg. When the boy was two years old, the family removed thence to Berlin, because of the French occupation of the seaport town.

The children learnt music under their mother, becoming nearly as clever a pair as Mozart and his sister. By the time she was thirteen, Fanny could play from memory twenty-four of the preludes of Bach. But she was not allowed to become a professional musician. Her father did not choose; later in life even Felix would not allow Fanny to publish her compositions: she was an important member of high society, and it was not good in those days for women to display their artistic gifts in public, if of any particular social standing. Indeed, Fanny was thirty before she played at a concert, and then it was permissible only because the function was to help some charity.

These two loved each other so dearly that Fanny's death—coming at a time when her brother was ill through overwork—hastened the death of Felix. He could not stand under the strain of his grief. She was a woman of absolute goodness; witty, and very clever. Her husband was a painter named Hensel. The author of the book mentioned on page 242 was their son.

Fanny was better in the writing of songs and short piano pieces than larger works, though she wanted to be successful in the rarest of all forms—chamber music. She produced several volumes of songs and lyric pieces for the piano, and some of her songs were issued with songs by Felix, appearing as the work of the latter (*e.g.*, Nos. 7, 10, and 12 of Op. 9, and Nos. 2, 3 and 12 of Op. 8).

Some of her songs were sung to Goethe in November, 1821, when the poet was seventy-three years old and the girl-composer sixteen: he wrote a little poem for Fanny, which he directed to be sent to her:—

Denn ich mir in stiller Seele
Singe leise Lieder vor,
Wie ich fühle dass Sie fehle,
Die ich einzig mir erkor:

Möcht' ich hoffen, dass Sie sänge
Was ich Ihr so gern vertraut,
Ach! aus dieser Brust und Enge
Drängen frobe Lieder laut.

Felix began to write music at the age of ten. He wrote rapidly, in the year 1820 producing between fifty and sixty individual pieces (movements of sonatas and cantatas, and detached works). In 1821 he wrote two operas and part of another; some motets in four parts; five symphonies for strings; and a mass of other works, among them the piano sonata in G minor, which is in the Novello volume (the first movement of this was written in 1820).

These works of Mendelssohn's childhood are now in the Berlin Library: the writing is curiously neat and careful, and most of the pieces are dated. The autograph of a string quartet in E flat, written between March 5th and 30th, 1823, is in the British Museum (Additional Manuscripts No. 30,900).

Before he was thirteen years old, Felix became acquainted with Goethe, Weber, and Spohr.

His early compositions were played at home. On alternate Sunday mornings a small orchestra was formed in the dining-room, which Felix conducted even when so small that he had to stand on a stool to be seen by the players in the back rows. A new piece of his was given on each occasion. Either he or Fanny would play the piano works; another sister, named Rebecka, sang his songs; and a brother named Paul played the 'cello works.

These home-concerts developed, especially after 1825, when Abraham Mendelssohn took a house

with a " gartenhaus " big enough to hold several hundred persons. Here, in 1826, was played for the first time that most wonderful production of youth, the *Midsummer Night's Dream* overture; the composer being but half-way through his eighteenth year. Two years earlier Felix had put forth his thirteenth symphony—the Op. 11, in C minor. A year earlier (1825) he had produced his two-act opera, *Die Hochzeit des Camacho*, Op. 10 (" The Wedding of Comacho ").

This opera was performed under Spontini at the Berlin Opera on April 29th, 1827; it might have been successful, but the critics and some interested persons banded themselves against the opera, and it was not repeated. Such an experience of active jealousy distressed Felix, and he was unhappy for some time.

Early in life Felix developed that wise understanding of the music of Sebastian Bach which was to make him one of the leaders in the Bach revival. He formed a choir to study Bach's choral music, which had been forgotten, and in 1829 conducted a performance of the *St. Matthew Passion*. Berlin wondered at this music. The conservative musicians of the place were annoyed with him, and he became very unpopular.

Mendelssohn's playing of Bach's organ works set the manner which was followed throughout the nineteenth century.

In 1825 he and his father visited Paris. There they met, and were friendly with, several good

musicians—Meyerbeer, Rossini, and even Cherubini. They knew also the great pianists of the time—Herz, Kalkbrenner, Hummel, and the rest who lived in France. Moscheles he had known since 1824.

Then in April, 1829, the two came to England, where already the young musician's fame had arrived. His public successes were extraordinary; many friendships were made; and the way was opened for the English events of his later life. This first visit to England included a tour through Scotland, out of which was born the *Hebrides* overture.

In 1830 father and son went to Italy for a time. They returned to Germany, and passed at once into France again, where now Mendelssohn, Chopin, and Liszt became acquainted. There are several books for the student to read on the matter of these travels and acquaintances.

London was visited for the second time in 1832, and for the third time in 1833: the first and third books of the *Songs without Words* were published here in 1832. A fourth London visit fell in the year 1833.

A year after the issue of the "Melodies for the Pianoforte" (as the *Lieder ohne Worte* were first called) Mendelssohn was curious to know what amount had accrued in royalties. The publisher was Vincent Novello. Only 48 copies were sold during the twelve months, the sum due to the composer being no more than four pounds

sixteen shillings. During the next three years the further copies sold amounted to no more than 66. Thus Mendelssohn received for the two books eleven pounds eight shillings in four years. So he made a batch of three preludes and fugues for organ, three pieces for female chorus, and his royalty agreement in respect of the "Songs without Words," and sold the lot to Novello for thirty-five pounds. In time to come, the "Songs" were excessively popular; and they were used to point much of the ridicule directed against Mendelssohn's music: yet the growth of their popularity was curiously slow.

In 1833, at the age of twenty-four, Felix Mendelssohn became general-music-director to the town of Düsseldorf, which was the centre of the Lower Rhine musical festival. His duties covered the music of the principal churches, of the theatre, and of two musical associations. The salary was ninety pounds a year. Here he planned the oratorio of *St. Paul*. He liked the work at Düsseldorf; but in 1835 accepted a call to the highest possible office in the musical world of Germany, which was the permanent direction of the famous Gewandhaus concerts in Leipzig.

The great work of his life was done in Leipzig. Music in the town flourished in his hands, and the period is one that forms a sort of synopsis of the history of European music of those years.

Mendelssohn married in 1837, his wife being Cécile Charlotte Sophie Jeanrenaud, daughter

of a minister of the French Reformed Church. She was about eighteen years old. The marriage was a happy one.

The King of Prussia called the composer to Berlin in 1841 and made him Kapellmeister. Out of this post came the incidental music to *Midsummer Night's Dream* and other plays (*Athalie; Antigone; Œdipus Coloneus*). It was a troublesome post, however, full of annoyances and vexations. And as Mendelssohn would not neglect other responsibilities (in 1843 he founded the great conservatoire at Leipzig), his kapellmeistership really wore him out, being the chief cause of his early death. He likewise kept up his travelling, the famous meetings between him and Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort taking place on the occasion of his seventh visit to England (1842). He taught regularly in the conservatoire, and composed incessantly.

Elijah occupied Mendelssohn's mind from 1837 to the day of its completion—August 11th, 1846. The production in Birmingham on August 26th, 1846, greatly excited him. The immediate success of the oratorio took him to several places to conduct it. A restlessness seized hold of him, and he could not relax. His health became impaired, until a definite illness supervened, and he died after a lengthy sickness.

He was a man almost painfully attached to members of the family. By his father's death

in 1835 he had been grievously shaken, and little less by his mother's in 1842. As mentioned above, it was the sudden death of Fanny (in the May of 1847) that finally broke his strength: when the news was told him, he fell to the ground insensible, and never fully recovered.

III

Mendelssohn's life and character became a cherished possession in the England of 1850-1880. The brilliant musicianship and lovable qualities he had revealed set up an immediate tradition. Dead but a year or two, he filled the thoughts of all music-lovers; and a generation later people were still demanding and receiving particulars of his life. Mendelssohn's private life was posthumously opened to the public gaze in a manner not known before or since; and that life having been pure and strong, the picture but added to the affectionate respect which our grandparents had for him.

Even when critics were beginning to study his music objectively—that is, without the bias imposed by the composer's actual personality, this remarkable interest in the man himself persisted, until it embraced even the earlier members of the family, and the Mendelssohns almost equalled Royalty in this matter of public information. Felix died in 1847 ; by about 1865 he had been

recollected by all those of literary talent who had been in touch with him, whether close or casual; yet as late as 1879 the interest here and in Germany was such that a vast biographical work on the Mendelssohns, written by a member of the family chiefly for the family itself, was actually published for the information and pleasure of the general public. This work* was typically Teutonic: it had an exhaustive thoroughness, and none but a German could have produced it; but such was the light shining from Felix, the book became almost clear, and many persons read it.

Interest in Wagner obscured interest in Mendelssohn; and from 1880 we have not given him nearly so much thought.

He was a man of honesty, not only in life, but in art, which is more rare. Thus he personally hated the music of Berlioz: in a private letter to Moscheles—one never intended for the public eye—he said that the Frenchman's orchestration was "such a frightful muddle, such an incongruous mess," that after handling one of his scores he felt he must wash his hands; yet when it became his duty to prepare some of the music of Berlioz for performance in Leipzig, he strove with all his powers to secure a perfect performance, driven thereto by his knowledge that dislike of a

*"Die Familie Mendelssohn," by Sebastian Hensel (1879; in English 1881). The translation from Menander given above on page 228 is used by Hensel to open the second volume of his work.

thing makes it more than normally necessary for the responsible artist to take care.

Of other musicians a different tale is told. Musicians have been known to ruin a performance in order to discredit a performer, and they have been known to produce music badly in order to discredit the composer. Such musicians often make good in the world, in the way a dishonest and selfish business man often gets on well: but they are not in the end particularly happy persons. Mendelssohn was a most happy man.

The type of music which he represents is that of Haydn and Mozart, not that of the late Beethoven or the new school of Berlioz, Liszt, and Schumann. He wondered that so clever a critic as Berlioz should be so blind to his own demerits:

> His judgments on others are so clever, so cool, and so correct, and he seems so thoroughly sensible; yet he does not see that his own works are rubbishy nonsense.

Music in performance, especially his own music, he liked to be swift and direct, with no pulling about of the time or tone for "effects."

*" A too close intercourse with the masters of the sentimental school is likely not only to blunt our understanding of the masters of the opposite school, but actually to make their music distasteful. A range of sentimental feeling is awakened and nourished by an enthusiasm for *sentimentalisms* in poetry and music: when this feeling is applied to the performance of works

When composing, he kept his mind open to concert conditions in a manner that reminds one of how business is managed—Mendelssohn and Moscheles met at Clementi's music warehouse in London, to try over the *duo concertante* which the two musicians had jointly composed: this piece is a set of variations for pianoforte, four hands, with orchestra, on the march in Weber's *Preciosa*. The year was 1829. They decided on a *cadenza*. What came next in the piece was a quiet bit of solo.

"We must have a little orchestral *tutti* between the *cadenza* and the solo," said Mendelssohn, "since, of course, the people will applaud the *cadenza*."

"How long will they clap their hands?" asked Moscheles.

"Ten minutes, I daresay," answered Mendelssohn.

Says Mendelssohn in the letter wherein this story is told:

belonging to the opposite school the rendering becomes shallow, insipid, insignificant, jejune and, in short, unbearable.

"By playing Mendelssohn in the way Schumann may—and, indeed, must—be played, we produce a caricature, which is the more disgusting in that it does not permit even an approximate realisation of Mendelssohn's chief qualities—beauty and purity of form. . . . Anyone who plays Schumann tolerably is sure to play Mendelssohn intolerably: the position reversed makes for a slightly better state of things."

Thus wrote Hans von Bülow about the year 1880. We must read all Bülow says in a critical manner, because while there is truth in his opinions, there is likely to be over-emphasis in the statement and perhaps an exaggeration in his application of the truth.

> Moscheles beat me down to five minutes. I promised to supply a *tutti*, and in this manner we took the measure, embroidered, turned, and padded the thing, put in sleeves *à la Mameluke*, and at last with our tailoring produced a brilliant concerto.

The illustrative point of the above story is, that the audience were expected to make an approving noise for five minutes after the technical display of the *cadenza*, that while the noise went on the orchestra must fill up the interval, and so that in such a work the only matter of "musical" importance was the virtuosity of the soloist.

A hundred years ago people applauded thus. The only twentieth-century survival of the manner is our habit of making a noise on the singer's last top note, while the accompaniment struggles distractedly to its close, and the singer cleverly makes her note heard over the sum of the compound.

About the time when critics of poetry began to declare Tennyson the weakest of poets, Mendelssohn was declared by musical critics to be the weakest of musicians.

Old-fashioned critics in the twentieth century continued to fight against him. These were the critics who had been formed during the great Wagnerian epoch of the 1880's and 1890's, and who on the one hand were still in the swirl of the

Berlioz enthusiasms of the 1870's and the Richard Strauss enthusiasms of the 1900's.

On the occasion of Mendelssohn's centenary, which fell in 1909, they wrote collective essays on the subject of his baneful influence upon later musical composition, in their excitement almost cursing the composer, and invariably sneering at his personal qualities: that Mendelssohn was a gentleman, in the ordinary sense of the word, seemed an objectionable feature.

But as the twentieth century continued, the music of Mendelssohn grew in favour in several quarters, until it was actually acclaimed as great music once again, and recommended to the careful observation of students.

These quarters were those of the extreme modernists in the art, who were trying to cast out emotion and sentiment from their own works and to bring back the modern equivalent of earlier simplicity and order.

In amateur circles the revival of Mendelssohn was helped by the circumstance that his swifter and lighter music is ideal for the pianola.

XII. SCHUMANN

Therefore, since
Thought hankers after speech, while no speech may evince
Feeling like music—mine, o'erburthened with each gift
From every visitant, at length resolved to shift
Its burthen to the back of some musician dead
And gone, who feeling once what I feel now, instead
Of words, sought sounds, and saved for ever, in the same,
Truth that escapes prose—nay, puts poetry to shame.
I read the note, I strike the key, I bid record
The instrument—(thanks greet the veritable word!)
And not in vain I urge: "O dead and gone away,
"Assist who struggles yet, thy strength become my stay,
"Thy record *serve as well to register* I *felt*
"And knew thus much of truth! With me, must knowledge melt
"Into surmise and doubt and disbelief, unless
"Thy music reassure—I gave no idle guess,
"But gained a certitude I yet may hardly keep!
"What care? since round is piled a monumental heap
"Of music that conserves the assurance, thou as well
"Wast certain of the same! **thou, master of the spell,**
"Mad'st moonbeams marble, didst record what other men
"Feel only to forget! *" Who was it helped me, then?*
What master's work first came responsive to my call,
Found my eye, fixed my choice? Why, Schumann's
"Carnival!" . . .

BROWNING, Fifine at the Fair, XC, XCI, XCII (1872).

XII. SCHUMANN

I

Looking very broadly at the matter, we can let ourselves see one great difference between the romantic and the classical types of music.

The difference can be stated, and the statement will be true; yet the matter as a whole is so complex, and the two types flow so constantly together, that on a closer view every *nay* might be countered by a *yea*, until we and the subject arrive at confusion. And, moreover, the difference can be stated only by words and expressions belonging to other arts, which is not good because of the extreme individuality of the art of music.

These reservations made, we can say that romantic music is lyrical, and that classic is dramatic or epic.

A lyric poet is a writer who reflects on natural objects, is moved by them to a state of personal rapture, and expresses that state. Therefore he gives us a natural object seen through, and coloured by, his own personality; and again, by his own personality in a certain mood, which mood may be quite temporary. The poet is, more or less, the substance of his art: his works are pictures of himself.

The epic or dramatic poet is the writer who embodies in his art the natural objects themselves, irrespective of how his contemplative observation of them affects himself.

Sometimes we say that the one art is Subjective,

being conditioned subjectively by the personal nature of the poet, and that the other is Objective.

The professional critic is objective in manner when he can speak of music regardless of how it moves him as an individual: therefore all that passionate acceptance and rejection of music which make for temporary crazes are subjective.

Section (*a*) of the following is objective, section (*b*), where the matter is turned to a personal end, is subjective: and so the entire piece is of the lyrical type:

(*a*) The nightingale, so pleasant and so gay,
In greenwood groves delights to make his dwelling,
In fields to fly, chanting his roundelay
At liberty, against the cage rebelling.
(*b*) But my poor heart, with sorrows over-swelling
Through bondage vile binding my freedom short,
No pleasure takes in these his sports excelling,
Nor in his song receiveth no comfort.

The only value of the foregoing remarks for the present reader lies in the way they may help him to think of the composers of the post-Beethoven period—on the one hand Schumann, Chopin, Berlioz, and some minor musicians; and on the other hand Mendelssohn, Liszt, Wagner, Brahms and Franck.

SCHUMANN

II

Few composers have been loved in person solely for their music as Schumann has been loved. We admire this man, respect that, are interested in a third, reverence a fourth, and perhaps worship a fifth (or the thing his art embodies); but we do not love these men, because they are not so *subjectively* present in their art.

Schumann and his music are inseparable; he is his music, and his music is himself. He composes in the manner we might fancy a lyrist extemporizing the utterance of his own feelings; and as Schumann owned the lovable qualities of humour, fancy, and perfect poetry, it follows that we love the man to the degree we appreciate those qualities and can perceive them in music.

He was a Saxon, born into a bookseller's family at Zwickau. His grandfathers were a clergyman on the father's side and a surgeon on the mother's. There was no music in the family, but a good interest in literature; the father wrote, and he sympathized with his son's inclination to music from the beginning.

Robert began to compose before he was seven years old; but there were no trained musicians in Zwickau (in those days a place of about five thousand inhabitants) who could teach and stimulate him, and for the first eighteen years of

his life he gave as much energy to literature as to music.

He read Schiller, Goethe, Byron, the Greek dramatists, and Jean Paul Richter. At fourteen he wrote an essay on musical æsthetics, and at sixteen a novel named "Juniusabende." Locally he was chiefly known as a good pianist. The youth wrote verse, setting some of the passages to music.

Schumann came early in contact with the works of Schubert, and those of the youthful Mendelssohn (the latter only a year his senior), and their music deeply moved him. But his nature was always generously responsive, and he was the friend of all earnest effort.

The bookseller died in 1826, and in losing his father Robert lost the parent who was willing he should become a musician. Therefore in 1828 he went to Leipzig, to study law. Music, poetry, and philosophy of the transcendental kind, however, occupied him; and though he several times tried to settle down to his professed study, those other subjects always interfered successfully.

More and more he played the piano, until he put a finger out of action by a mistaken use of a dangerous device to improve his technique; and then he determined to give his life to composition. This was in 1830. He was twenty years old. The delightful *Papillons* (Op. 2) were already partly written.

Until the autumn of 1832 he lived in the same house as his pianoforte master, Friedrich Wieck, in Leipzig, at times almost as one of Wieck's family. His master in composition was Heinrich Dorn.

Wieck, born in 1785, lived to 1873, thus dying seventeen years after Schumann; Dorn, who was only six years older than his pupil, lived on to 1892. These two men found Schumann a troublesome pupil, because though he worked well, it was irregularly, and to impulse.

A little money had come to Robert Schumann in the year of his majority, and for a short time he was able to live just as he chose, without having to work at music for a living. He was frequently hard up, however.

In 1834 he founded a paper, the "Neue Zeitschrift für Musik"; this was to be the mouthpiece for new poetical art, the organ of youthful effort and youthful courage, in which talented work might be acclaimed, and vicious mediocrity exposed. Other musicians joined in the founding of the paper; but Schumann was its mainstay and the man who made it famous. His essays have been reprinted. Several of his remarks have become familiar as household words in musical literature; as, for example: "The study of the history of music, seconded by hearing in actual performance [that is, not merely reading from the printed score] the master-works of different epochs, will prove the

most rapid and effectual cure for conceit and vanity." Here Schumann only states afresh the old truth that conceit is a result of ignorance ; but he states it exceptionally well, and in a manner rare among the musicians of his period.

He was a gifted writer. What weakened his power as critic was first the circumstance that he wrote of new music, and secondly the circumstance that he could not speak harshly, knowing by imaginative intelligence that harsh speech hurts, and suspecting that it does no good.

He was not interested in technical or scientific criticism, but in the criticism that is suggestive. It was his belief that " the highest form of criticism is that which leaves an impression similar to the impression aroused by the work criticized." Therefore he approved of appreciative criticism, and not of the kind which is (not correctly) called destructive. Once Schumann wrote that " In this sense " (of making an *impression* similar to that made by the art-work) " Jean Paul could possibly contribute more to the comprehension of a Beethoven symphony than a dozen critics who place ladders against the colossus and measure it with yard-sticks."*

By 1835 Schumann had written the *Etudes*

* Criticism by formal analysis cannot be good when it is the first and only stage in the criticism ; but it is not only good, but actually a final necessity, of that thorough criticism which first enters into the heart of the work, and then proves its discoveries by demonstrating the character of the form and the essential agreement of form and substance.

symphoniques, the *Carnaval*, and the piano sonatas in G minor and F sharp minor.

Into these, as into earlier and later works, he poured the poetry and the poetical pictures that flooded his mind or came to him from his reading. "As soon as possible," he writes to his brothers,* "read the last scene in Jean Paul's 'Flegeljahre,' because the *Papillons* are intended as a musical representation of that masquerade."

He also pointed his music by reference to his own individual conditions and circumstances: thus the Asch of *Carnaval* is the town in which lived Ernestine von Fricken, a girl to whom he was engaged for a while; and the titles "Estrella" and "Chiarina" in *Carnaval* refer to Ernestine and to Clara Wieck, the daughter of Friedrich.

Without knowing it, Robert had apparently been in love with Clara for some years. He recognized his love in 1836, and the next year asked her father's permission that they might marry. The father refused, and it was not until 1839 that he was compelled by law to take back his refusal.

Clara was by nine years younger than Robert. She was a great pianist; and the story of their married love is as grateful as the story is interesting

*One of these brothers, Julius, died in 1833. In the same year died a sister-in-law. These breaks in the family affected Robert, throwing him into that melancholy which is common in natures of his introspective kind, and which was very frequent in his life.

of her forty years of public work after her husband's death to popularize his piano music and make it fully intelligible. She lived to 1896.

In the years when Schumann was waiting for Clara Wieck he wrote some of his most delightful pianoforte works—the *Kinderscenen*, the Fantasia in C major, the Novelettes, the *Faschingschwank aus Wein*, and the *Fantasiestücke* (in which last come pieces better known to-day than any of Mendelssohn's *Lieder ohne Worte*, if we except the "Spring Song" and "Bees' Wedding").

No man's marriage but Robert Schumann's ever flowered so richly in art. His happiness inspired him. The year 1840 was the miraculous year of songs, a hundred and fifty being written. The next twelve months saw the creation of two symphonies (B flat, and D minor) and the *Overture, Scherzo, and Finale;* also the beginning of the piano concerto in A minor. The year 1842 was the year of chamber music—the piano quartet, the piano quintet, the three string quartets, and the "Fantasie" piece for piano, violin, and 'cello. These were his great years, the peak or climax of his life.

About 1844 Schumann began to suffer from nervous prostration. He was frequently unable to work, forgetting an invented theme while in the act of noting it on paper. Fear of high places came upon him, and an abhorrence of metal. Very terrible in a musician, he fancied the note

SCHUMANN

A was perpetually sounding in his ear. He was now only thirty-four years old.

Clara and he travelled into Russia, Austria, and Bohemia, giving concerts. But he became more and more anxious to remain quietly at home, until it was almost impossible to get him to go anywhere. His creative power varied. Thus in 1849 he wrote thirty works, some of large size (for example, the music to Byron's *Manfred*), and in 1848 he wrote his *Genoveva* opera; while in other years he wrote little. Editorial work, which had lasted for ten years, he gave up in the first year of illness.

Disinclination to speak developed. A visitor might talk for an hour without Schumann saying a word; but it was clear he was listening to everything, and enjoying the company. He used to go of an evening to an inn, where he would sit with his face to the wall, whistling softly, and developing mentally his musical ideas.

After ten years of this, insanity afflicted him. He tried to drown himself on the 27th of February, 1854. The remaining two years of his life were spent in an asylum, where he often appeared normal, yet was never truly safe. He died in his wife's arms. The last music he composed was a set of variations on a theme which he declared had been sent him by the spirits of Schubert and Mendelssohn.

III

It is profitable to look at Schumann side by side with Mendelssohn. Schumann was the thorough Romanticist, Mendelssohn the Classicist living in the romantic period, and so a representative of the kind of art we call Pseudo-Classic.

Mendelssohn, by the education he received, was a master of form from the beginning: he thought in the fine and stable forms of the classical period—that is, the period of Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven—just as a perfectly instructed and clever youth might think in the fine literary style of, say, the great writers of English at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Form was thus so natural to him that it operated commandingly upon the working of his mind; the construction and alternation of phrases (or, as one might say, the selecting of words, the syntax, and the logic of pure literature) proceeded almost as authoritatively as those operations proceed in the course of our daily speech; and as a result the individual operation of his own personal thought was interrupted.

We have a similar experience when we first have to write in metres that we have previously studied in the literature classes.

Mendelssohn therefore had to work very hard to conquer this disposition. When he felt the growing individuality within him, he had posi-

tively to fight for freedom to give it room to breathe.

But Schumann, by the education he received, was not a master of form from the beginning. He began to express himself before he had learnt the science of the art. Instead of climbing a prepared stairway to the light, he was forced to carve one for himself; and a rough thing he made of it sometimes—at least, rough in the eyes of those classically minded. He fought hard to become himself the plastic servant of pure form, as Mendelssohn fought to make form itself a plastic servant to his fancy; and he fought victoriously in all directions that were conformable to his own free, romantic personality.

Nothing could be more true than the shape of Schumann's short lyric pieces. His large works, however—the sonatas and symphonies—are not of the same truth and firmness in their architecture; which is why the world has not used them so much.

Schumann admired Mendelssohn's command of form. He said he could learn from him (that is, could learn of things by a study of his music) for years. Yet Schumann had the more energetic spirit, the more vital creative imagination or understanding, and the most active poetical fancy: and he himself knew of this fact.

The nature of the two men, of course, made them thus differently conditioned in the matter of form. Mendelssohn is best in pieces that sub-

mit to the exquisite order of the classics, Schumann best in those that obey entirely poetic thought. The young student may observe these truths by calling to mind the *Hebrides Overture* and the *Fantasiestücke*.

It is by the power of form that we are first wrought into appreciative sympathy with music. We do not all believe this statement, and some of us deny that it is necessary to consider form at all. Yet the statement is correct, because it is only by form that we can appreciate the substance contained in the form and supporting it: a sentence the form of which is incomprehensible to us will be unintelligible.

Of course, we need not know about the form scientifically; very lofty expressions of thought can be clear to us even though we know nothing of the rules of syntax and the principles of logic: all we need is an instinctive perception of form, and we can respond to a sonata without knowledge of its architectural proportions, its changes of time and metre, its cyclic modulations and serial subjects.

Consequently Mendelssohn, whose form was known, became enormously popular in his lifetime; and Schumann, whose forms were unusual (having to carry unusual substance) was not popular until almost a generation after his death.

Schumann's music seems simple enough to us to-day; but during the composer's lifetime it was very complex to many people. The critics

here and there said the composer had no particular skill, and others sincerely believed that his music was unhealthy—morbid, brooding, and over-introspective.

It took a considerable time for Schumann's music to spread widely even in Germany, and in France it had no truly great fame in general even at the end of the nineteenth century.

He is vitally poetical, with pictures in his music that, from beginning to end, are emotional; that is, the pictures are of a mood, or of a frame of mind, not of a definite event or a piece of concrete imagery: and so the Russians and other Sclavonic nations responded early to his art.

In England as late as 1870 Schumann was "a respectable musician, whose boldness was greater than his originality"; and it was asserted that only Madame Schumann's public performances kept her husband's music alive, and that the moment she retired from the concert world it would drop into disuse: this was said specifically of the A minor piano concerto.

Vienna was the first great centre of Schumann-worship; from 1850 to 1860 there was in that city a Mendelssohn craze, then from 1860 to 1870 came this Schumann craze, after which arose the great local glorification of Franz Schubert, who for a time was claimed by the Viennese to be a second Beethoven in power, beauty, and range of thought.

XIII. CHOPIN

Like to the murmur of a weary stream—
Like to the dance of yellow leaves that fall
Fantastically slow—like to the call
Of spirit to far spirit in a dream,
Thy music! (save by times, when joyous theme
Of clarion-note blown from a castle wall,
Or pageant dance for Southern carnival,
Bade through the shadow Pomp and Pleasure beam).

Years wore, and years; and paler burned the light,
And lower, softer breathed the dying song:
Thus fainteth day, grey willow-banks among,
So gently that we know not when 'tis night.
O, who dare mourn the loss of our delight?
Pain was so earnest, and Decay so long.

HENRY FOTHERGILL CHORLEY (1849).

XIII. CHOPIN

I

We do not carry with us clear pictures of the members of the family to which Chopin belonged. Bach, Mozart, Schubert, and several other composers, are companioned by relatives who seem well nigh as real as the musicians themselves. Even Handel and Beethoven do not stand alone in our gaze. But Chopin is, for most of us, merely Chopin. He does not merge sympathetically with other figures, and so those other figures do not acquire individuality in the background of his life, work, and personality.

The cause is partly that none of his relatives and early friends much influenced him, and partly that he was rather a detached, self-centred man. Yet he loved parents and sisters, and his letters home are full of a bright affection. For his mother he had an exceptionally tender and lasting regard.

The father, Nicholas Chopin, was a French subject, a native of Nancy, in Lorraine. The history books tell us of the Polish king Stanislaus, who, when dethroned, lived in and governed over the Duchy of Lorraine, which at that time (the first half of the eighteenth century) was allowed to belong to him. He was a good king to the people of Lorraine; and when after his death that country reverted to the French king, the Lorrainers still kept up a warm interest in Poland. They were keen to visit the country, and to live

there as tutors. This was how Chopin's father came to live in Poland, and how Chopin came to be born a Pole.

Nicholas Chopin was brave and adventurous. He joined the army under the patriot Kosciuszko, fought well, and was made a captain. The war over, illness took hold of him. Prevented thus from returning to France immediately, he now fell in love with a Polish girl named Justine Krzyzanowska, whom he married in 1806, settled permanently in Poland, and lived by teaching. He died in 1844. His wife died in 1861, the last survivor but one of her family.

There were four children. Louisa was an educationalist, writing books and essays and articles. Isabella, who was longest lived of the four, became the wife of a schools inspector. Emily died at the age of thirteen. Frederic, born at the village of Zelazowa Wola, not far from Warsaw, was the musician.

II

Frederic was a child prodigy, his precocious talent being for piano playing. He was acclaimed a second Mozart (as were all clever children for nearly a hundred years), and the ladies in the mansions of the aristocracy adored him. This, however, did not at first spoil him, and he was a genuine child. He studied music carefully, and

when in 1829 he made his great debut in Vienna, he was a master both of composing and playing.

During childhood he was full of animal spirits, with plenty of fun; bright; and extraordinarily sensitive to beauty in any form. Other accounts, however, say that he was sickly and feeble, though with the courage to smile through his sufferings.

It is not, by the by, easy to read some of the books on Chopin without irritation, because his biographers were easily run into a lush sentimentality. Thus : *A beautiful angel, with a form pure and slight as a young god of Olympus, with a face like that of a majestic woman filled with sorrow divine, and, the crown of all, an expression at once tender and severe, chaste and impassioned.* And thus again : *When his wandering fingers ran over the keys, suddenly touching some moving chords, he could see how the furtive tear coursed down the cheek of the loving girl or young neglected wife—how the tear moistened the eyes of young men, enamoured of glory and eager for it. Can we not fancy some beautiful maiden asking him to play a simple prelude, upon which, softened by the tones, she leans her rounded arms upon the instrument to support her dreaming head, the while she suffers the young artist to divine, in the dewy glitter of her lustrous eyes, the song sung by her youthful heart? Did not groups like sportive nymphs throng round him . . .* and so on.

Note that these writers are not obscure

rhapsodists. The one passage is from George Sand, the other from Liszt.

The rondo in C minor, Op. I, was published in 1825. From the same period come the variations on *La ci darem la mano*, the sonata in C minor, Op. 4, and some of the posthumous works—polonaises, waltzes, and nocturnes.

In 1830 Chopin entered upon the life of a travelling virtuoso pianist. He gave some successful concerts in Warsaw, making a hundred and twenty-five pounds out of one of these. Paris he reached by way of Breslau, Dresden, Prague, Vienna, Munich, and Stuttgart. But these concerts *en route* were not profitable, and the young man had to wait in Munich for some money from home.

The critics were kind enough. Yet he had a dread of newspaper influence, and wrote in a letter :

> If the newspapers cut me up so much that I could not venture before the public again, I have resolved to become a house-painter; the work would be as easy as anything else, and at any rate I should still be an artist !

By now Chopin had composed many études, mazurkas, polonaises, waltzes, and nocturnes; also the polonaise for pianoforte and orchestra, and other large works. While at Stuttgart he heard the Russians had taken Warsaw, and it is

said that the despairing rage which seized him on the news is expressed in the "Revolutionary" étude, Op. 10, No. 12.

He reached Paris in a propitious hour. His fame had preceded him, but chiefly he was aided by the warm sympathy for Poland which filled France.

Chopin found that in Paris were better pianists than himself—men with a surer technique, and with infinitely greater ability to play the music of other composers. Apart from his own works, indeed, he was not a good interpreter of music. Therefore, with that personal modesty which is the finest and most moving quality in his nature, he set to work hard, actually considering the advisability of taking lessons from Kalkbrenner. Chopin wanted to "create a new era in art," as he phrased it—to create a new school; but because he did not know the old one he feared he might not succeed.

He was in the right world now for understanding the various departments of music, past and present; and soon he was on terms of friendship with such musicians as Rossini, Baillot, Cherubini, Hiller, Herz, Sowinski, Bellini, Berlioz, Meyerbeer, Liszt, Osborne, Brod, Franchomme, Pixis, Field, and many others who are but names now, but who leap again to life the moment we regard that age and time with imaginative minds.

The quality of friendship varied, of course, and in several directions it might hardly be

distinguished from jealous enmity. Chopin, for example, said that Berlioz' music was enough to warrant you breaking off acquaintance with the composer; and even after Chopin's death Berlioz could utter such a sneer as "Il se mourait toute sa vie."

In 1835 he retired from his profession of public virtuoso. Henceforth he taught, composed, lived brilliantly in the social world, and played a good deal at private and semi-private meetings. In the year 1837 appeared the first signs of that consumption which was to kill him at the age of forty.

He travelled considerably. He and his parents met at Carlsbad in 1835; they had been separated for five years, and were not to meet again. For all his warm love of the people at home, Chopin could not drag himself from the freer and more vivid life of Paris. We read that father and mother parted from their son in a mood of painful tenderness, all three alike having a premonition that they were not to be together again.

The revolution in Paris (1848) drove Chopin to England. He played here in several towns, travelling as far north as Glasgow and Edinburgh. But he became very low-spirited. His illness developed, and he returned to Paris. A message was sent home to Poland. One of his sisters hastened to France, and was with him when he died in the early morning of October the 17th, 1849.

He did not fear death, but for a long time had been dejected. How could he be otherwise, who for a long time had to be carried up and down stairs, undressed, and put to bed, and who was left with strength only to play the piano :

> On Thursday I am to leave terrible London. I have got neuralgia in addition to my other ills. Tell Pleyel to send in a piano on Thursday evening; have it covered; and buy some violets to make the room sweet. When I return I should like to find some books of poetry in my bedroom, to which I shall probably be confined for some time. . . . Let the house be thoroughly warmed, and well dusted. Perhaps, I may get well again.

Not fearing death, Chopin prepared for both death and life. He put his papers in order, destroying some works in manuscript, and revising others; and he took a new house, the furnishing of which he regulated as well as he was able. All through the last months he expected death, yet prepared for possible living; and on the very day he died, his furniture was being moved from the old house to the new one. His was an admirable passing.

III

Chopin's music is with us. We know it well, from the work of virtuosi, who have a " Chopin

Group" in forty-nine out of fifty programmes; and we know it also from our own playing, either on pianoforte or by pianola. Therefore it does not call for description, being as familiar as the characters in Dickens.

But Chopin himself is not with us; no gramophone or Duo-Art record exists of his performances; and all who knew him have departed. And so we turn with interest to contemporary accounts of his performances and to contemporary descriptions of his personality.

The following lengthy passage is one of the last newspaper reports on this composer. It was written by Henry F. Chorley (1808-1872), the English critic who bitterly opposed the music of Wagner and Schumann but accepted the music of Chopin. Chorley was critic for the "Athenæum" for nearly forty years: it was in that paper, in the issue for July 1st, 1848, that he published the following. The recital took place at 99 Eaton Place, on June 23rd :

> It is not too much to say that, at a period when so many sources of pleasure appear to be exhausted—when mechanical skill, too, has been carried to a point precluding the hope of much further discovery—M. Chopin gave his audience, yesterday week, an hour and a half of such musical enjoyment as only great beauty combined with great novelty can command.

CHOPIN

CHOPIN

We have had by turns this great player, and the other great composer; we have been treated to the smooth, the splendid, the sentimental, the severe in style upon the pianoforte, one after the other: M. Chopin has proved to us that the instrument is capable of yet another "mode"—one in which delicacy, picturesqueness, elegance, and humour may be blended so as to produce that rare thing, a new delight.

His treatment of the pianoforte is peculiar; and though we know that a system is not to be "explained in one word," we will mention a point or two so entirely novel that even the distant amateur may in part conceive how from such motions an original style of performance, and thence of composition, must inevitably result.

Whereas other pianists have proceeded on the intention of equalizing the power of the fingers, M. Chopin's plans are arranged so as to utilize their natural *in*equality of power, and (if carried out) provide varieties of expression not to be attained by those with whom evenness is the first excellence.

Allied with this fancy are M. Chopin's peculiar mode of treating the scale and the shake, and his manner of sliding with one and the same finger from note to note, by way of producing a peculiar *legato*, and of passing the third finger over the fourth finger.

All these innovations are "art and part" of

his music as properly rendered, and as enacted by himself they charm by an ease and grace which, though superfine, are totally distinct from affectation. After the "hammer and tongs" work on the pianoforte to which we have of late years been accustomed [the reference is to Liszt] the delicacy of M. Chopin's tone and the elasticity of his passages are delicious to the ear.

He makes a free use of *tempo rubato*, leaning about within his bars* more than any player we recollect, but still subject to a presiding sentiment of measure such as presently habituates the ear to the liberties taken. In music not his own we happen to know he can be as staid as a metronome: while his mazurkas, etc., lose half their characteristic wildness if played without a certain freak and license—impossible to imitate, but irresistible if the player at all feel the music. This we have always fancied while reading M. Chopin's works: we are now sure of it after *hearing* him perform them himself.

The pieces which M. Chopin gave at his *matinée* were Notturni, Studies, *La Berceuse* (a delicate and lulling dream with that most matter-of-fact substratum, a ground bass), two Mazurkas, and the two Waltzes (Op. 64, in D flat and C sharp minor).

*Let the young performer observe the admirable clarity of this passing definition of Free Time.

Most of these might be called "gems" without misuse of the well-worn symbol. Yet if fantasy be allowed to characterize what is essentially fantastic, they are not so much gems as pearls—pearls in the changeful delicacy of their colour, in occasional irregularities of form, not destructive, however, of symmetry—pearls in their not being the product of health and strength. They will not displace and supersede other of our musical treasures, being different in tone and quality to any possessions we already enjoy: but inasmuch as art is not final, nor invention to be narrowed within the limits of experience, no musician, be he ever so strait-laced and severe—or vowed to his school—can be indifferent to their exquisite and peculiar charm.

It is to be hoped that M. Chopin will play again; and the next time some of his more developed compositions, such as Ballads, Scherzi, etc., if not his Sonatas and Concerti. Few of his audience will be at all contented by a single hearing.

Chorley's manner of writing about Frederic Chopin is refreshingly different from that of the writers copied from on page 267; and allowing for a little stiffness and weight, his report reads like the notice of a concert given last week. Chopin did play again—on July 7th; and in his programme he included the scherzo in B flat minor.

IV

Thought of Chopin cannot be long continued without the mind turning to the love that existed between him and George Sand (Madame Amandine Lucile Aurore Dudevant), the great woman-writer of France. This love made for Chopin's happiness for eight years. Indeed, it made life possible for him during that long time. Without it, he would have died; and when these two separated, he did die within a couple of years.

They became closely acquainted in 1837. The musician was then dispirited. Popularity for the moment had failed him; more seriously, he was ill in the first stage of consumption. George Sand was about to leave Paris with her son Maurice, whose health perhaps was likewise threatened. She had determined to spend the winter in the south of France; and Chopin said that if he was in Maurice's place he fancied he would soon be cured. George Sand and mutual friends persuaded him to leave Paris with her and Maurice.

For a year they roughed it on an island to which few visitors ever went, and she treated Chopin with a mother-like tenderness that made her companionship and love a necessity to him.

For eight years they were together, and in that time their love helped Chopin in every way, making him the finer character and developing

the good in him. *He never suffered me to fall in his esteem*, said George Sand.

In 1847, when the musician was thirty-eight and the novelist forty-three, the separation came. Maurice was now a man of twenty-three; he and Chopin were not comfortable together, and Chopin was irritable because of his illness: George Sand had to interfere between them, and her support of Maurice annoyed the other. Moreover, the man who had married George Sand's daughter (a bad character, whom the mother had to refuse admission to her house) worked on Chopin, poisoning his mind against the woman who for those years had helped and encouraged him: he accused her of injustice—*Never had a reproach passed between us save once only, and that, alas! the first time and the last. So lofty an affection as ours must needs break, not wear itself out in unworthy altercations.*

A good deal has been written of this vital part of Chopin's life. George Sand has been harshly condemned. The truth is, that Chopin loved her, that she cared for him with the rich affection of a large-hearted woman, and that the noblest portion of his life was the years they were together.

Chopin was a supercilious man in the company of artists. In the beginning of his life he studied closely the peasant music of Poland, and went to peasant gatherings, though of course remaining outside them. But when he lived in Paris, and was taken up by society as a sort of clever pet-

musician, he was lost to the true world of natural life and creative effort (without losing his own capacity for work, as is hardly necessary to say). He found the company of artists less pleasant than the company of men and women of high social standing; and if he had accepted an invitation to a poet's, painter's, or musician's, and a later invitation came from a member of the aristocracy, he would break his promise without a thought, and generally without troubling to notify the first person. He was flattered to the marrow by the attention of the High World, and reacted with rudeness to the art-world. On the other hand, he had a way with him of pretending almost exclusive affection for particular individuals, so that each of his friends thought he or she was more in his regard and confidence than any other; this was falseness, because it was inevitably accompanied by a disparagement of other mutual acquaintances—in letters as well as in conversation, which was foolishness. And so Chopin fell out with friends: once he and Liszt were great friends; the rupture, which is famous in musical history, was partly due to Chopin's pride.

Moritz Karasowski, who wrote the earliest reliable book on Chopin, does not make him out to be so unattractive a person as the foregoing paragraph implies, which represents the conclusions of Frederick Niecks. He also will not allow him to be the "beautiful angel-majestic

woman of divine sorrow-young god from Olympus" compound. Nor will he allow that Chopin was anything but normally healthy until his life in Paris broke him down.

An old schoolmate named Wilhelm von Kolberg said that Chopin was ill but once before his twenty-first year, and then only from a cold.

Writing home in 1830, the musician said, "I am as strong as a lion, and they tell me I am getting stouter. Altogether I am doing well, and I hope, through God, who sent Malfatti to be a help to me (oh, splendid Malfatti!), that I shall do still better."

Musicians who heard Chopin play a good deal, and who—living a long life afterwards—heard the great pianists of the later generations, say that no one ever gave his music in the manner of the composer. We therefore do not ever hear it exactly as it was imagined by him. Any fine musician may recapture the exact ideas of Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven, because their works do not live, as Chopin's do, in a world of almost exclusive "poesy," but are part of the grand and general world of music.

Chopin knew very little of the music of other men, and so he played only his own compositions. Halle, in twelve years of fairly close intercourse, during which he heard him privately or publicly some scores of times, says that the only work by another composer in which he ever heard him was Mozart's pianoforte trio in E major, a work

used by Chopin, almost invariably, to open the recitals of his new pieces at the "Salon Pleyel." Halle tells us that once, at Chopin's request, he played to him the Beethoven sonata in E flat, Op. 30, No. 3, and that after the *finale* (a robust, energetic and headlong work) Chopin said that this was the first time he had liked the piece, remarking that previously it had always appeared to him very vulgar. Of Mendelssohn's music, he admired only the first of the *Songs without Words*, saying that that number struck him as a song of the clearest beauty—maiden-like in its purity.

But it was inevitable that Chopin should live in and for his own music. He was different from other people, and if he had given himself over to other kinds of music, he would have confused his own art. Adverse criticism by musicians he did not admire made him angry; when Meyerbeer said in a superior manner that Chopin's *rubato* in the playing of mazurkas converted the time from triple to quadruple, the result was a quarrel between the two men and a refusal on Chopin's part ever to forgive Meyerbeer.

Taking him all in all, Chopin appears either as a miraculously beautiful exotic in our music, or as an artist entirely *sui generis*. His music requires to be played with a ceaseless poetic fancy, working upon a foundation of manly vigour.

XIV. BERLIOZ

Musique, art d'émouvoir par des combinaisons de son les hommes intelligents et doués d'organes spéciaux et exercés. Définir ainsi la musique, c'est avouer que nous ne la croyons pas comme on dit, " faite pour tout le monde." Quelles que soient en effet ses conditions d'existence, quel qu'aient jamais été ses moyens d'action, simples ou composés, doux ou énergiques, il a toujours paru évident à l'observateur impartial qu'un grand nombre d'individus ne pouvant ressentir ni comprendre sa puissance, ceux-là n'étaient pas faits pour elle, *et que par consequent* elle n'était point faite pour eux. *La musique est à la fois un sentiment et une science ; elle exige de la part de celui qui la cultive, exécutant ou compositeur, une inspiration naturelle et des connaissances qui ne s'acquièrent que par de longues études et de profondes méditations.*

La réunion du savoir et de l'inspiration constitue l'art. . . .

BERLIOZ (1830).

XIV. BERLIOZ

I

As was the case with other musicians, Hector Berlioz had a father who wanted his son to take up the profession he himself followed. This father was the medical man of the village Côte Saint André, near Grenoble, in south-east France. He gave his son elementary instruction in playing the flageolet, and allowed him to follow on further with music—the playing of the flute, the study of harmony, and experiments in composition; but he would not let him learn the piano, because he was afraid the piano, being a more complete instrument, might draw Hector too far away from thoughts of medicine.

Berlioz later in life said he was glad he had been denied the pianoforte, for the reason that otherwise he might have become, not a composer who thought out his music in silence with pen and paper, but one who picked it from the keys. (Beethoven, however, used to work himself up by playing the piano; and sometimes he hammered a movement into existence at the instrument; one of the movements so wrought is the *finale* of the *Sonata appassionata*.)

When he was nineteen years old, Hector Berlioz went to Paris to study medicine. Naturally, he studied music instead. He made friends with Jean François Le Sueur (1764-1837), the composer of church works and opera, and took lessons from him.

The confidence that was the prime quality in his nature carried him right into the heart of things at once: he was an untrained music-lover, just up from the country; yet he did not hesitate to ask a university professor of literature to write an opera libretto for him, or to try to borrow money from eminent persons to pay for the performance of a work he had written, or again to approach famous actors and singers with a request that they should produce his works. Hector believed in himself; he was at this time without powers of self-criticism, and so could not measure the difference between his ability and the ability of well-developed and experienced artists: this is a fault common to all youth, and when it persists beyond the age of fifty or so, we say the person is an incurable amateur.

What saved Berlioz in these first years was a failure. He had the opportunity offered him of a church performance on Innocents' Day; for this he provided a mass, and actually obtained the services of the conductor of the Grand Opera. But the performance never took place. At rehearsal they found the parts were full of mistakes; and the small portion of the work the composer heard was enough to show him his music was faulty. "I suffered the torments of hell," he says. Little less tormenting were the subsequent sneers of his father when news of the failure reached him. "But," says Berlioz, "I swallowed it all in silence, and I persisted none

the less." He was not of the stuff of the incurable amateur.

Soon after this, he met a young man named Augustin de Pons, who financed a performance of the (re-written) mass. Berlioz learnt again the lesson that he had not yet mastered the art of music-making. So he burnt the mass, likewise an opera, an oratorio on the crossing of the Red Sea, and some smaller works. Here was a generous sacrifice to a genius rapidly becoming articulate: the man abandoned rubbish the moment he saw it was rubbish, and thereby kept a mentally clear world around him.

His general world, however, was not altogether pleasant. There was trouble with his parents, and he was very poor. Madame Berlioz cursed him, she being a religious woman with a horror of the life followed by artists. Hector lived on bread and dried fruits, sitting when the weather was fine at the foot of the statue of Henry IV on the Pont-Neuf. Pupils might have secured him an income, steady if small; but he neglected those who came, and so lost them. The opera *Les Francs Juges*, written at this time, was rejected by the theatres.

Winter coming on, in his extremity Berlioz fought for, and gained, a placed in the chorus at a theatre for comic opera; his wages were about fifty shillings a month. He shared two rooms with a young student of chemistry, and bought a piano for £5 10s. 0d. Hector did the shop-

ping for the pair, and the chemist did the cooking.

Life now was easy and happy, the two lively spirits living on less than three pounds a month all told; until Berlioz fell ill of an abscess in the throat: this might have killed him, but he stabbed it with a pen-knife, and the operation was successful.

At this time Haydn and Mozart were not widely known in Paris, and Berlioz did not much care for their music. The Rossini craze was at its height, to his terrible detestation. His great love was for Gluck and Spontini (1774-1851), but principally for Gluck, whose operas he knew by heart. Very soon he responded passionately to Beethoven.

The Gluck operas were frequently given in Paris, and Berlioz managed to attend the performances with a band of young men whom he led in applause—much to the disgust of the *chef de claque*, or head of the group of professional applauders, who were engaged by the artists to make an approving noise at stipulated moments. . . . In those days an audience used to applaud in the middle of a bar; a happy modulation or a charming bit of instrumentation was cheered; and people used to clap an effective accent in a passage of *recitative*. Sometimes they would demand the repeat of a passage in the middle of a movement.

Berlioz was rather a trouble to the musicians at

the opera. The producers liked to "improve" on older composers, like Gluck; and Berlioz used to make public protest. Thus when cymbals were introduced into the ballet of Scythians in *Iphigenia in Tauris*, he waited till there was a moment of silence, and then shouted out, "There should be no cymbals there! Who dares correct Gluck?" And when the trombones were left out of an accompaniment, he shouted, "This is insupportable! The trombones should not be silent." These interruptions made the musicians angry, and the audience used to laugh; but one protest was enough for any alteration—the composer's score was followed at the next performance.

Three great influences came into the life of this intense young man about this time. One was the Shakespearean drama; another was the richly romantic music of Weber; the third was his love for an English actress (Irish, rather) named Henrietta Smithson, whom five years later Berlioz married.

II

The first elements of musical success came all at once.

Four times Berlioz tried for the Prix de Rome, which takes a student for two years to Italy and for another year to Germany; and four times he failed. He had, after some trouble with Cheru-

bini, the director of the Paris Conservatoire, given a concert there which had won him some publicity; he had written and produced the *Symphonie Fantastique;* and he had had a work (based on Shakespeare's "The Tempest") performed at the Théatre Italien: and now, in June, 1830, he won, at his fifth attempt, the Prix de Rome he so much desired and needed.

The piece which he had entered the examination was a cantata called *The Last Night of Sardanapalus*. This was performed, and Berlioz sat by the conductor to watch the rendering. The close of the piece depicts the firing of the King's palace, the music building up to an explosive climax. Let Berlioz tell the story of the fiasco which marked the performance at this point:

> Five hundred thousand curses on the musicians who don't count their bars! In my score, a horn gives the cue to the drums, the drums to the cymbals, the cymbals to the big drum, and the first blow on the big drum brings about the final explosion. The damned horn missed his note; the drums, not hearing the cue, kept quiet; the cymbals kept quiet, the big drum also; nothing moved—nothing!! Only the violins and the basses continued their feeble *tremolo:* there was no explosion, only a fire that went out without being lighted. A cry of horror leapt from my panting breast; I flung my score across the orchestra; I upset

two desks. What noise! Orchestra and academicians scandalized, audience bewildered, the composer's friends indignant. Here was another catastrophe, the worst I had experienced. If only it had been the last!

Their son's victory in the struggle for the Prix de Rome was grateful to Monsieur and Madame Berlioz. The mother withdrew her curse; and after a visit home the composer, now twenty-seven years old, went to Italy.

He had met Liszt some time before, who (as he tells us) had never read Goethe's "Faust." Cherubini, of course, he met a good many times in Paris: their encounters were always cat-and-dog-like.* Two or three days after reaching Rome he became acquainted with Mendelssohn.

Three weeks later rage possessed him. He heard that his *fiancée* was about to marry another man. The rage was of the murderous kind. "My course was taken on the instant: it was to proceed to Paris, and, without mercy, to kill three women, two guilty, one innocent. Of course after this I was bound to kill myself." He bought the dress of a waiting-maid with which to disguise himself when approaching his victims, and set off in a carriage for France. But before starting, he wrote directions to a friend for the completion

* "On the success of my concert [a second performance of *The Last Night of Sardanapalus*] Cherubini seemed like a cat that has swallowed mustard; he spoke no more, but sneezed."

of some scoring he had in hand: the friend was "to double in the octave below, with horns and clarinets, the passage for flutes at the final reappearance of the theme; and to write out the chords that follow for the full orchestra." On the way he mentally rehearsed the details of the coming tragedy. . . . Gradually doubt entered his mind as to the wisdom of killing himself; it seemed such a pity that all the music crowding within him should be destroyed. The doubt angered him. But it returned; and suddenly Berlioz found he was hungry. With hunger came the reaction. He went no farther towards France. "I lived entirely by myself. I wrote the overture to *King Lear*. I believed in God. I sang. Convalescence!"

Rome did Berlioz no good. He disliked the Italians, and the ancient city made him miserable. Very little music came to him: he says he wrote there only the *Rob Roy* overture (which he burnt a year later in Paris, after it had come badly out of concert performance); a revision of the "scène aux Champs" of the *Symphonie Fantastique;* a part of *Lelio;* a few miscellaneous pieces; and *Le Captive*. He therefore left Rome before the two years were expired, returning home to Côte Saint André in May, 1832.

A year later he and Henrietta Smithson married. She was ill that year, having met with an accident that broke her leg; and she was hopelessly in debt, having failed in her theatrical

ventures. Berlioz was shorter of money than ever, being possessed of no more than some fifteen pounds—borrowed from a friend: moreover, he had refused first to marry a girl selected for him by his parents, and secondly he had married Miss Smithson against the wishes of his parents, and so was once again cut off from home.

The marriage did not turn out well, and eventually husband and wife separated.

Courage never failed Berlioz, or honesty. He gave a concert which brought in several hundred pounds, and with the money paid off some of his wife's debts. He gave a second concert: this likewise was a financial success; but more importantly still, it made him acquainted with Paganini, the violinist—"a man with long hair, piercing eyes, face strange and ravaged."

Paganini was the cause of Berlioz composing the symphony *Harold in Italy* (1834). He sent Berlioz a cheque for twenty thousand francs at the end of the year 1838, acclaiming him the only successor to Beethoven. But it was not Paganini who found the money.

In 1836 the Minister of the Interior, who had set aside the sum of three thousand francs to be expended annually in the encouragement of sacred music, directed Berlioz to write a mass: the *Requiem* was the result, written in a mood of tempestuous energy. But still there was no safe income, and at last the composer became a writer for the *Journal des Débats*, his journalist work

bringing him both fame and money, but likewise "furious and nearly countless hatreds."

A little of his music was played in Germany under Robert Schumann; the same piece—the overture *Les Francs Juges*—was attempted in London, but vainly; in September, 1838, his opera of *Benvenuto* was given in Paris with very ambiguous results (except that it stimulated the already mentioned gift through Paganini); and the first part of Berlioz' life was over.

III

But the same struggles and difficulties marked the second part of his life; and there is no long phase of entire serenity and contentment to be found in any period of his recorded history. The man who, in his age, must write as follows, has failed in his own interior and personal life, whatever his success in the outside world or even in art:

> I am in my sixty-first year; I have no more hopes or illusions or vast conceptions: my son is nearly always far removed from me: I am alone: my contempt for the imbecility and falseness of men, my hatred of their atrocious ferocity, have now grown to a head, and I say to Death hour by hour, "When thou wilt!" Why then does he delay?

Berlioz fought to the end with restless courage. He travelled in Belgium, Germany, Austria, Russia, and England, taking his music with him. In Paris he constantly produced new works, the latest of which are quite different from those of his first years, attaining something of a classic grandeur. But his fame never became stable; he never was assured of a safe position, even when twenty-one performances of his opera *Les Troyens à Carthage* (1863) enabled him to give up his work on the "Débats," after "thirty years of bondage."

He was for a long while ill with neuralgia, and often obliged to keep his bed; yet he struggled on. In 1867 an American tried to engage Berlioz to visit the United States, offering him a fee of four thousand pounds. In November of that year he went again to Russia; his artistic success was magnificent, but the climate tried him severely.

Berlioz died on Monday, March 8th, 1869, in the morning. He was utterly worn out. In Italy, Giuseppe Verdi, his junior by ten years, was already living the retired life of ease and contentment in the country and preparing for the composition of his greatest works. This Italian had succeeded by giving the public what they wanted; the Frenchman had failed by almost ferociously refusing ever to compromise in the smallest degree with the low desires of the public; he had been too honest, and the crowd of enemies that always forms round an over-honest man was,

in his case, made larger and more powerful by the circumstance that, in the Paris of his time, selfish men of mediocre ability happened to abound and to be in positions of authority.

It was fighting these men that wore him out and made him write in the tone of the last quotation copied above. But he could not help fighting them; he sniffed the battle afar off, and always rushed back to Paris: no victory abroad contented him; he wanted to conquer Paris, where his rejections had been most painful and most complete.

IV

We do not find it easy to make up our minds about Berlioz' music. We know he is a genius, and in some respects an almost unique musician; but we cannot readily see that he is a true master, and so are unable to make final appreciative and critical statements.

The reason of this ambiguity lies partly in our ignorance of his music in the mass. The works are not played frequently, and though we may hear two or three pieces in a season, the selection is not instructively representative: Berlioz wrote in two styles, that of his later period being other than the wild way of his young manhood. Performers still play from the first period more than from the second. And the music of Berlioz can be tested only by hearing: even Schumann,

writing in the midst of the composer's life, said that his scores did not yield their secret to the eye, but only to the ear, when translated into actual sound.

The early works attract or repel according to the nature of the listener. If we have a liking for gigantic or monstroús ideas—hell, damnation, slaughter, terror, demons, devils, witches, blasphemy, emotional recklessness, and the like, the early works attract us, because we can carry the ideas in our mind and perceive an illustrative accompaniment to them in the music. The violent material means of the music adds to our excitement; and like the contemporary approvers of Berlioz, we say the music is *Colossal! Cyclopean!* If we have no liking for such ideas, the music seems trivial, indeed childish, like the language Berlioz invented for the Infernal Spirits in Pandemonium :

(*a*) in common-time, with plenty of syncopation: *Hás! Irimirú Karabráo! Trádióun Maréxii fír tru dîu-xe búrrudí-xe Fóry my Dinkórlitz O méri káriú O mévixé mérikaribá O mí dará carlibó lakínda mérondór Mít ays-kó.*

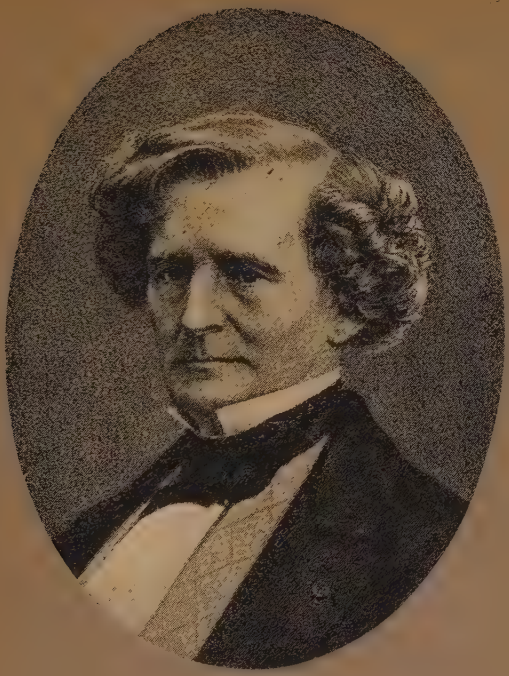
(*b*) in triple-time:

Diff, diff,	*merondor*	*aysko*	*Has, has,*
Satan,	*Has, has,*	*Belphegor,*	*Has, has,*
Mephisto,	*Has, has,*	*kroix,*	*diff, diff,*
Astaroth,	*diff, diff,*	*Belzebuth,*	*Astaroth,*
Mephisto,	*sat,*	*sat ra-*	*ik ir ki-*	*mour*

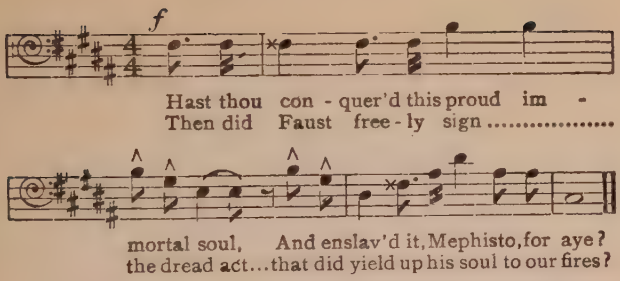
The "horrible" music of Berlioz, and all other music of the kind, refuses to remain horrible. Music refuses to express ideas and emotions of base character for more than a generation or so. After a while, its sounds become either placid or trivial, because there is no sublimity in those ideas, and because music can express only the sublime or the pleasant. This is the great philosophical fact of our art.

To express the idea of God's judgment, Berlioz will employ sixteen drums, tuned to give a chord, in contrast with four brass bands elsewhere in the piece (the *Messe des Morts*); other writers, more truly aware of the emotion and character of the subject, will use the quietest means and write in almost a motionless manner.

Horror in art excites; the sublime profoundly moves us. When the excitement fades, the means of effecting the excitement appears ridiculous. Doré's pictures of Dante do not now touch us seriously; and the following theme, which Berlioz invented for the voice of the Princes of Darkness, strikes the imaginative mind of to-day as more exquisitely funny than anything Gilbert and Sullivan could have made for their comic operas.



BERLIOZ


f
Hast thou con - quer'd this proud im -
Then did Faust free - ly sign .....
mortal soul, And enslav'd it, Mephisto, for aye?
the dread act...that did yield up his soul to our fires?

Heine, writing from Paris, played in Mephistophelian manner with Berlioz. A passage like the following is humorous reading; yet actually it is not unlike some of the composer's own descriptions of his fantastic music and of his sensations in early years :

> Here is a flapping of wings that announces no common singing-bird. This is a colossal nightingale, Philomela in the size of an eagle, such as (it is said) there were in the primeval world. Yes: in the music of Berlioz I find, on the whole, something primeval, and indeed antediluvian, reminding me of extinct kinds of animals, of fabulous kingdoms and sins, heaped impossibilities, Babylon, the hanging gardens of Semiramis, Nineveh, the wondrous works of Mizraim, of which we see the same in the pictures of John Martin, the English painter.* Indeed, if we seek an analogy in the pictorial

*Some of the subjects of Martin's pictures were the "Day of Wrath," the "Plains of Heaven," "The Judgment," "Eve of the Deluge," "Belshazzar's Feast," and "The Destruction of Herculaneum."

art, we find a most congenial similarity between Berlioz and this mad Englishman, the same predilection for the monstrous, gigantic, and material boundlessness: in the pictures glaring lights and dark shadows; in the music screeching instrumentation: with the one, little melody; with the other, little colour: with both little beauty, and no sympathetic feeling. Their creations are neither antique nor romantic, neither Greek nor Gothic, but Assyrio-Babylonio-Egyptian. . . .

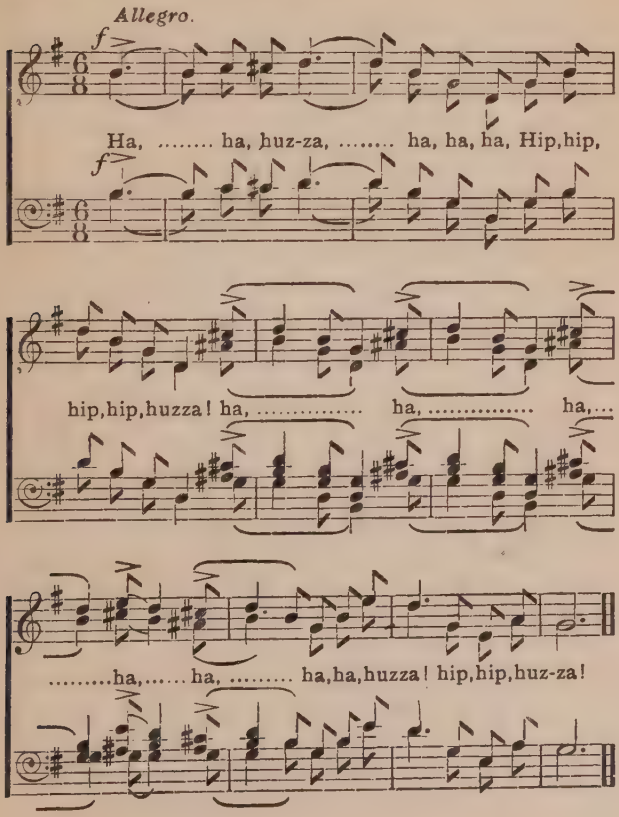
Some time later, when he was acquainted with the simpler works of Berlioz, and particularly with the naturally beautiful *L'Enfance du Christ*, Heine wrote to the composer, and said how sorry he was to have been unjust to a friend: the poet realized he had criticized on a foundation of half-knowledge, and that (like nearly every writer in the eighty years since this time) he had spoken noisily of the few compositions that were noisiest of nature. Berlioz said to Heine :

"But why were you so careless as to utter, in the manner of a vulgar critic, an absolute opinion on an artist whose work is far from known to you? You always think of the *Witches' Sabbath*, of the *Marche au Supplice*, of the mock *Dies iræ*. I can do, and have done, things of quite different character."

Among those things "of vastly different character" is the opera *Les Troyens*, which when we

hear seems to be among the truest music written since Beethoven, and the beautiful piece for female voices which tells of the death of Ophelia.

Berlioz is the great master when his subject is grand and simple, and when he uses direct and natural music, as in the Peasants' Chorus and Dance in *Faust*. You never forget your first hearing of the following:



There is a kind of music which is effective, moving, and full of character however it is performed, if only the performance be reasonably good and the interpretation not wilfully peculiar. It seems to accept all types of mind, adapting itself to them, and drawing them into agreement with its own nature. This is the greater kind of music: it has a quality that is variously termed abstract or universal; and it is called classical. Handel, Bach, Haydn, Mozart, and Mendelssohn produced it.

Another kind is different in all respects. It requires to be performed always in one and the same manner. It will not submit to varied treatment, and when produced by musicians of a nature different from the nature of the music, it becomes meaningless. This kind is the poetical or romantic; and it is a kind which so far has not proved permanent: it is represented by the works of composers like Berlioz, who said :

> In order to render my pieces well the executants, and especially the conductor, must *feel* like me. An extreme precision, combined with an irresistable verve; a regulated fire, a dreamy sensibility, and a distempered melancholy, are required: without these qualities in the performers, the traits of my music are altered or effaced.

Soon after his death, great fame descended for a while upon Berlioz, first in France, and then

in England. His music was constantly played, and his art was discussed in terms of almost ecstatic eulogy.

The cause of the fame in France was not so much artistic as "occasional." The war between France and Germany drove the French even further from German art than was usual; and the strengthened dislike of Wagner, who was supremely representative of his country, found means to exercise itself in the music of Berlioz. This secondary consideration often influences us in music: it made London set Buononcini up against Handel, Paris set Piccini up against Gluck, and in different generations Germany set up Brahms against Wagner and Max Reger against Richard Strauss.

But while the anniversary of Berlioz' death went unobserved in Paris in the year 1889, it was celebrated in Berlin by a concert under the direction of Hans von Bülow, at which the audience was large and enthusiastically appreciative. Yet a year earlier, when Xaver Scharwenka gave the *Requiem* in Berlin, three times in six weeks, the work did not go home to the hearts of the people, and though the music was well performed, Scharwenka's enterprise attracted no particular attention. In the little town of Sondershausen, in Schwarzburg-Sondershauses, Berlioz for many years was played as often as Schumann, more often than Mozart and Mendelssohn, and nearly as often as Beethoven.

XV. LISZT

Spirto gentil, cui nell' eterna mente
Della più bella idea produsse Amore,
Esempio vivo di virtù, d'onore,
E di vera pietà specchio lucente,
Io credo ben, ch'in te l'Onnipossente
Spiri più ch'in alte' uom del suo valore,
E di quell' armonia t'inondi il core,
Che poi sempre sonar dentro si sente :

Ed ei ti die' quella divina cetra
Al cui suon si dilegua agnoscia e duolo,
Ch' ogni cuor duro intenerisce e spetra
Affinchè per te sol da questa inferno,
Dell' armonio su l'ali alzata a volo,
L'alma si lievi al suo principio eterno.

BIAGIOLI (*c.* 1840).

XV. LISZT

I

In the general understanding Liszt remains chiefly as the popular pianoforte virtuoso, the creator of the tone-poem, and the friend of Wagner. He was far more than this, however, by the complexity of his life and work, by the richness of his character, and by the far-ranging influence of his actions. Only to the age of thirty-eight was he a public pianist, that is, to the year 1849; and from about 1860 he lived more for religion and for religious music than anything else.

The entire nineteenth century seems to centre in this man. He was known to Beethoven and Schubert; yet in 1924 some of the famous pupils of his old age are still at work in public. He was a public favourite before crinolines came back into fashion and before Keats died; yet he withdrew from his public while Chopin was still alive. Most of the great music of the middle nineteenth century passed through his hands and was proved by him to be good. In him were three men—virtuoso-pianist and conductor; teacher, author, and propagandist; and composer.

More importantly in the larger view of things, he was one upon whom might be constructed a book of the philosophy of art and life. Liszt was a man of noble self-sacrifice and continuous labour for others, of a gracious generosity equalled only by the generosity of men like Ruskin, and

of supreme ideality, though his ideality may not be that of men and women of other types. Observed in the light directed upon him by his character, he is seen to be the noblest figure in musical history.

The fame that came to him in his childhood, when George IV and other rulers of the time honoured him, was of the excitable, fashionable kind. But when he came to England in the year before Queen Victoria's jubilee, his fame was of that deep and solid kind which, in former days, accompanied a victorious king. Of the great masters born between Berlioz and Wagner, he was the last to die, and in his last years he struck on the public imagination as the aged survivor of an earlier race of giants.

His father, Adam Liszt, was of pure Hungarian ancestry; his mother (whose maiden name was Anna Lager) was of Austrian-German. Ferencz, or as he afterwards was known, Franz was born in the Hungarian village of Raiding. The locality was German-speaking, and Liszt never learned the native Hungarian language: he became a perfect master of French, writing his books and essays in that language.

Adam was at first only a clerk in the agent's office on the Esterhazy estate. He was not able to marry until promoted to the office of steward. Thus the family was not well off, though able to live comfortably enough.

The father was a fair amateur musician.

Given safer circumstances, he could have done well as a professional, and during his younger days he seems to háve had desires in that direction. Ferencz, seen almost in babyhood to be a born musician, was taught piano playing by his father from the age of six. He came out in public in the year 1820, when nine years old, playing at concerts in Œdenburg (or, in the Hungarian, Sopron) and Pressburg. The works he played were of the size of concertos by Ferdinand Ries, the favourite pupil of Beethoven. He also played improvisations, which were popular in those days and expected of public pianists: the performer took several themes from familiar operas, which may or may not have been suggested by the audience, and worked them into an impromptu fantasia. Two themes thus used by Ferencz were a Rossini cavatina and the rhythmical melody of the slow movement of Beethoven's A major symphony. Sometimes after the concert the pianist wrote out his extemporization and published it. Liszt did this in the case of an Impromptu on melodies from Spontini and Rossini, which pairs chronologically with his *Etudes*, Op. I, a work dating from about his fifteenth year.

These local concerts made the child famous in his part of Hungary. Some noblemen took him in hand, raised a fund for his education, and arranged for him to spend a number of years in Vienna and Paris. Adam gave up his office

under Prince Esterhazy to devote himself to his son.

They went to Vienna, where the boy studied piano playing under Carl Czerny and theoretical matters under the famous Antonio Salieri. He was acquainted with Benedict Randhartinger, the composer and singer who died in 1894 at the admirable age of ninety-two, and with many other Viennese musicians. Beethoven was at a concert given by the boy on April 13th, 1823; at the close of the improvisation, he went to him at the piano and kissed him.

Father, mother, and son went to Paris in 1823. Concerts were given on the way, at Munich, Stuttgart, Strasburg, and other places; and the boy was hailed as the long-expected second Mozart. Fame went well before, and the musicians in Paris were warmly interested in the little Hungarian; but it was not possible to get him entered as a pupil of the conservatoire, owing to regulations forbidding the admission of foreigners, and so Franz had to study privately.

Piano playing was apparently looked on as a subject in which he needed no further instruction; and indeed one can almost say that Liszt was in this subject self-taught, apart from the work under his father and Czerny. He worked at composition with Ferdinando Paër, the opera composer and, at one time, official musician to Napoleon. Then, from 1826, he studied counterpoint under the great theorist, Anton Reicha.

Liszt was never a master of polyphony: the style of the music he was afterwards to write did not call for pure polyphonic manner; and because the greatest kind of music is polyphonic, it follows that his music is not of the highest kind. The work under Paër resulted in a little operetta named *Don Sancho*, which, in the year 1825, the composer being fourteen, had three performances in Paris, at the Académie Royale: the score was lost afterwards by fire. Such early music has no value for a later generation, and the contemporary records do not state definitely that this operetta was really good.

Franz was a thorough child when he went to Paris; he liked games and fun, and was still amused by toys. He played publicly a good deal, in Paris, in the French provinces, and in England, to which country he came in 1824, 1825, and 1827.

II

The year 1827 saw the end of his childhood, for his father died then, leaving Franz and his mother dependent solely on what he could earn. In the same year began a period of mental distress for Franz, out of which he eventually recovered, but the effect of which remained all through his life.

It was a religious distress that fell upon him. He was an imaginative youth, susceptible to the

mass of moods, ideas, and impressions that were weltering in Paris at that time, and passionately anxious to understand philosophy, religion, sociology, and the other intricate matters that occupy the inner life. Reading restlessly, and without the aid either of an older friend or of a trained mind (his general education had been neglected), he became confused, falling, indeed, into a slough of despond while yet only sixteen or seventeen years old. There was, as Heine says, a "spiritualistic malady of the age" that seized upon Franz Liszt, almost ruining him for music. He gave up study, teaching and playing only in order to keep himself and his mother. He haunted the churches, and wished to take holy orders. All the books and essays and poems that poured over the city he devoured, whether intellectual, emotional, spiritual, or sensual. He read, and with a curious romantic ardour, the works of Hugo, Lamartine, Chateaubriand, George Sand, Saint-Simon, Ballanche, Fourier, Lamennais, Rodrigues, Sénancour, and a host of others, to the extent that these were available up to 1830. The beliefs of mystics, free-thinkers, atheists, free-masons, and revolutionists, alike fascinated him. He won out to victory in the end, aided by several external circumstances ; and it was this victory that made him good in all the essentials of goodness. But the struggle was great, and one can believe that from the age of sixteen to the age of nineteen Franz experienced

little happiness. Heine, who knew him well in Paris, summed him up as a man of distorted but noble character, unselfish, without guile, with a great talent for speculation, and ceaselessly interested in all philosophical investigation, particularly that investigation which tended to clarify social problems or problems of holiness.

Judged by what—without disrespect—we sometimes name in England the Nonconformist Mind or the Puritan Conscience, there were events in Liszt's life which are never recorded of good men. These events, however, judged by the light of Liszt's own religion (and we may not judge a man by any other light) were perfectly consistent. They did not make him any less good a man, because they harmed no one, not even himself.

Adam Liszt kept a diary, in which he made the following note on this aspect of his son's character:

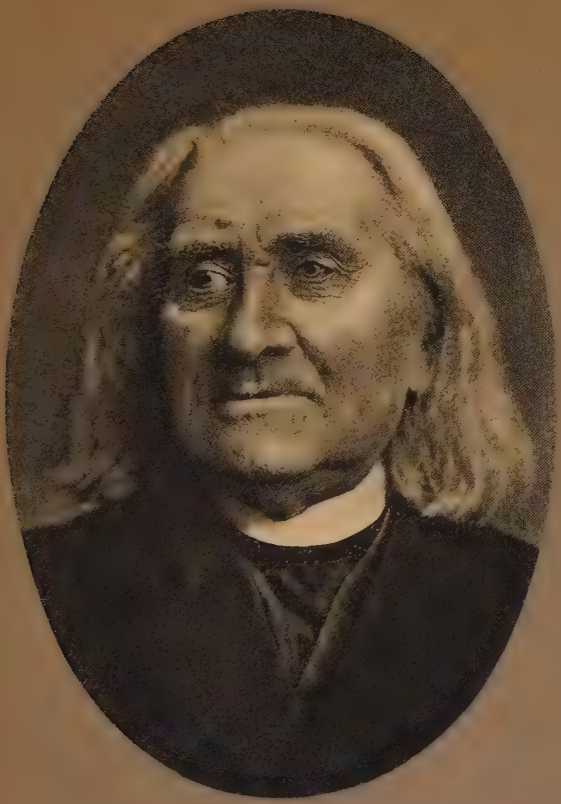
> From early childhood Franz had a natural bias for religious contemplation, and his intense love for the art of music was marked by a piety which had the sincerity of his years.

Heine, and other literary men and critics of the time, were interested in Liszt's mental adventures. The following is from the *Gazette Musicale de Paris* (1834), written when the subject was only twenty-three:

His piety is perfectly Rational [that is, proceeding from, or governed by, the reason] admitting a determined [that is, calculated, or reasoned] freedom of idea and conduct. It is not, as with the majority of fanatics, rigid, uncompromising, dogmatic, and alternately sentimental and brutal, but reasonable, sincere, and yet proceeding from the Catholic point of view.

When he was twenty-seven, Franz wrote an analysis of his youth. The passage professes to be a general exposition of youth, but it is a picture of the author:

You know that time of youth, the life-period from the 15th year to the 25th; you know that then, more than at other times, man surrenders himself to the external world, and the greatest influence upon his imagination is exerted by men, places, and things. Into his heart enter such a variety of matters. Dominated by the fate-like compulsion to Love, he yields a part of his *ego* to all that comes in contact with him. Stupefied by the tumult of his thoughts, the young man at this time has hardly begun to live: he is only striving to live. In him is but restless aspiring, desire, curiosity, a never-ceasing tide of opposed volitions. His moods and passions are unregulated; and, lacking a guiding thread, he loses himself in the laby-



LISZT

> rinth these create. He but smiles compassionately at the easy, natural, and simple; he is eager to encounter obstacles; he oversteps the bounds; he despises the good he might do, and scorns the feelings that might make him happy; and in all he is tortured pitiably by the sting of youth.

The author of this goes on to say that, at this time, he thought himself a Frenchman, but that the discovery in him of a latent patriotism proved a steadying influence.

The July revolution in Paris (1830) shook him finally from this religious confusion and philosophical distress. The arrival in Paris (1831) of the marvellous violinist Paganini stirred him to that effort which was to make him the greatest pianoforte virtuoso of the century. The arrival in Paris of Chopin (also in 1831) moved him to a warmer consideration of the pure poetry of music. And his close association at this time with the music of Berlioz—then in the first tremendous heat of his mighty endeavours—set him thinking along those lines that were to reach the large and ambitious works of the second period of his life.

There was a general respect for the young musician all through these years—as there was, indeed, all through his life; and the Italian sonnet quoted at the beginning of the present chapter expresses this regard, if in somewhat

extreme manner. Biagioli's lines were translated freely into French, of which the following is a still free translation into English: *Oh inspired youth, formed of the most beautiful thoughts which, from all eternity, reposed in the bosom of Divine Love; living model of the virtues; and true mirror of filial piety! I see for certain that the Almighty opens to thee, more widely than to other mortals, the riches of His favour, and that with thee He has placed that ineffable harmony which we still feel in our souls when thy music has ceased. He gave thee this divine lyre of sound, adorned with all sweetness, to make tender the hardest and most reluctant of hearts. Divine enchanter! that separatest the soul from the sad and obscure vale called life, whence, on the wings of harmony, it is forced to take its flight into the celestial country.*

III

Liszt was twenty when he determined to be master of the piano as Paganini was master of the violin. He was directly stimulated to this end by the visit to Paris of Sigismund Thalberg, the brilliant pianist who, a year younger than Liszt, had started his concert tours in 1830. There was in Paris a party for each of these young men, but the glitter and dazzling brilliance of the one performer could not support him against the finer mind and richer feeling of the other.

The famous period of Liszt's virtuosity lasted from 1833 to 1849. All the writings of the time that deal with music or touch on music are charged with accounts of what he did then. He had been brought up, as piano player, on Mozart, a little Beethoven, some Clementi and Hummel, and much Czerny. Now he flung himself into Chopin and Weber, and with intense passion into Beethoven and Schubert, striving after poetry by their aid as after technique by his imitation of Paganini. It was in this period that he wrote his operatic fantasias and other pieces of brilliant display music, the *Consolations*, the *Années de Pélerinage*, and many études. From 1834 to 1844 he and the Countess D'Agoult ("Daniel Stern") lived together; one of their three children became Cosima Wagner. Except between 1835 and 1840, when they lived mostly in Switzerland and Italy, his life was one of constant travel and piano playing amid scenes of the most astonishing enthusiasm—in England, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, Russia, Sweden, Austria, Hungary and even in Constantinople. The Austrian Emperor granted him a patent of nobility in 1840, and the representatives of the Hungarian nation presented him with a sword of honour.

Then, in the moment of his highest public power, and at the climax of his ability as a pianist, when his attainments were richest, he withdrew from this life to fulfil a higher ideal in art, which was to advance the music of other men. This

was in 1849, when his age was but thirty-eight years. No other man could do what he set before him, first because no other had exactly his native sympathy and generosity, and secondly because no other had the world of musical Europe in the hollow of his hand, able to carry it where he would. But for this action of Liszt's, the course of nineteenth century music would not have been deflected, but it would have been obstructed and delayed.

In the first eight or ten years of his virtuosic piano playing, his poetic interpretation was less developed than his brilliant execution From about 1840 onwards, the poetry of his art became supreme, until the technical virtuosity was lost sight of. Mendelssohn said, "I have not seen any musician in whom musical feeling ran, as in Liszt, into the tips of the fingers, there to stream out immediately." Schumann said, "How extraordinarily he plays, and how daringly and madly, and again how airily and tenderly! I have never hear the like. He appears to me every day mightier." Wagner said he did not, in the manner of other performers, *re*produce Beethoven, but instead created as it were coevally with Beethoven, taking part in a mutual act of direct production—which is the great art of the performer, akin to that of the actor, who, working with Shakespeare, makes Hamlet and Macbeth. Writing in April, 1841, Heine said :

Liszt has made the most wonderful progress since we last heard him. With his superiority he combines a repose we formerly missed in him. When, for instance, he then played a thunder-storm on the piano, we saw the lightning flash over his face, his limbs shaken by the tempest, and his heavy locks dripping, so to speak, in the heavy shower represented. But now when he plays the thunder-storm he rests above it, like the traveller standing on the top of the mountain while the storm rages below him. . . .

Since the year 1842 Liszt had accepted an engagement to conduct concerts at Weimar for three months of each year. Now, in 1849, he accepted the direction of the Court Theatre, Weimar.

Love of homeland had something to do with this altering of life and work. He had long been as a Frenchman, a quarter of a century having passed since he left Vienna with his father.

On the soil of France I have passed through youth's time of consuming fever, madly energetic life-manifestation. Here lie the ashes of my father; here, on a sacred burial-ground, my first sorrow found an asylum. How could I but feel myself child of the country where I had suffered and loved so much? How could I dream I entered life in another—that in my

veins flows the blood of another race, and that my people lived elsewhere?

Thus Liszt wrote ten years before going to Weimar, at a moment when his feelings had been profoundly moved by a disaster which had befallen the town of Pesth, the river Danube having overflowed its banks and destroyed many places.

The account of the inundation called forth in me a real agitation. An astonishing sympathy, a vital, irresistible need impelled me to assist the sufferers. And through these inward feelings was revealed to me the sense of the word *Fatherland*. Suddenly I transported myself into the past, and found in my heart the pure and untouched treasures of the recollections of childhood. A great landscape spread out before my eyes. Here was the well-known forest where sounded the call of the huntsman; here the river Danube, rushing down over its rocks; here the wide meadowland, with quiet flocks pastured in freedom; here Hungary, the vigorous, fertile soil which generated noble sons: here was my Homeland. "And I likewise," I said, in a mood of patriotism at which you might perhaps smile, "I also belong to this strong and ancient race; I also am a son of this sturdy, untamed nation, that is yet destined, it must be, for better days.

LISZT

IV

Weimar was not Hungary; but it was Germany, akin to his homeland, and particularly so to a German-speaking Hungarian. And it was a home of true music. Few Germans have long been pleased with music in France; and Liszt knew that he could not fulfil the ambitions of his middle life outside Germany. Twenty years later, when striving to alter the church music of the time, he tried to bring about the reform in Rome; failing, he came back to the nations that bore him, convinced that only in Germany and Austria might the necessary spirit be found.

Weimar had formerly been the great literary centre of Europe, in the lifetime of Goethe, Schiller, and Herder. He determined it should now become the great musical centre of Europe, the place for new music, and a home for the works of all the earnest composers who wrote out of their convictions and not for an assured and profitable market. He succeeded, and the place for twelve years was a spot to which all the musical world looked. There were difficulties. Liszt's manner of conducting and interpreting music was not fully approved, and towards the end there were oppositions: it was largely because of the jealous hindrances thrust in the way of his production of Peter Cornelius' opera, *The Barber of Bagdad*, in 1859, that Liszt decided to put an end to this work.

Here were produced, or rehearsed even when production was impossible, many large works : of Wagner, *Tannhäuser*, the *Flying Dutchman*, the *Faust* overture, and other works; of Berlioz, the *Symphonie Fantastique*, the *Harold in Italy* symphony, the *Faust*, *Benvenuto Cellini*, *Roméo and Juliet*, and the *Childhood of Christ;* Weber's *Euryanthe;* Schubert's *Alfonso and Estrella;* Schumann's *Genoveva*, *Manfred*, *Faust*, and *Paradise and the Peri;* many classical works of the earlier generation, and others by living men like Raff.

Now, and for the remainder of his life, Liszt kept his mind alert to notice the work of all contemporary composers, giving the men all the encouragement that lay in his power. Those who wrote in expression of a national sentiment received his warmest sympathy, because he knew that it was out of national sentiment that great art eventually rises ; and so among those who had cause to be grateful to him were Balakirev, Cui, Rimsky-Korsakoff, Borodine, Tchaikowski, Liadow, Franck, Saint-Saëns, Sgambati, Grieg, Smetana, and Albéniz. He was not equally in sympathy with the Brahms-Schumann-Joachim-Hiller group of German composers, and the members of that school were not particularly in sympathy with him ; some of them, indeed, felt an aversion for his work.

In Weimar were trained the famous pupils of Liszt, as von Bülow and Carl Tausig. And

here were composed his chief works—the concertos, the Hungarian Rhapsodies, the *Faust* symphony, twelve of the "tone-poems," the piano sonata, the *Missa solennis* ("Gräner Fest Messe"), many études, choruses, and a few miscellaneous pieces for church use. The transcriptions from Beethoven belong in part to the Weimar period, and some of Liszt's books, in the writing of which he was helped by the Princess Karolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein, with whom he lived from 1847 for a number of years.

Up to the time of Beethoven, conductors had not much to do. Instrumental music was so constructed that its beauty existed in the form; given correct creation of the form in performance, the beauty revealed itself: moreover, the "meaning" of the music was not personal, but impersonal and general. The director of the band needed only to give the time, and to mark the constituent parts of the bar, to guide accelerations and retardings, and to measure pauses. He sat in earlier times at a harpsichord, and delivered his beats with a roll of music-paper. The bâton came in with Spohr.

With Beethoven instrumental music became poetical. It assumed a dramatic character, and so demanded of the interpreter that creative or reproductive power which Liszt exercised in the playing of Beethoven's piano sonatas. Conducting naturally changed, the Strict style giving place to the Free. The conductor had to in-

dicate and control the phrasing and accentuation, or—in Liszt's words—govern the "periodic delivery" of the music. Liszt, however, considered that all directions should be impressed on the band at rehearsal; and that at the actual concert the conductor should merely remind the players, by attitude and slight gestures, of what they had learnt earlier in the day. He did not develop the expressive pantomime of the later school of orchestra conductors, and often stopped even beating time when his Weimar people were safely launched on a movement. It is probable that he rarely sweated with the rich profuseness of a conductor to-day, who not only changes his collar in the interval, but sometimes his shirt.

Wagner thought as highly of Liszt's interpretation of opera and orchestral music as of his interpretation of Beethoven's piano works. He said:

> On the day it became certain I was in a hazardous position [because of his share in the 1848 revolution] I saw him conduct a performance of my *Tannhäuser*, and from the way he did it I was astonished to recognize in him my second self; what I felt as I conceived this music, he felt as he performed it; what I wanted to say as I wrote it down, he said as he made it sound. Wonderful!

LISZT

V

Franz Liszt was fifty when he gave up his work at the Court Theatre. Twenty-five years of life yet remained to him, in which was formed the Liszt of latest tradition. The boy prodigy is remote as George IV; the virtuoso belongs to the generation of Bellini and Donizetti; the conductor, composer, and teacher of Weimar belongs to the historical period of the middle life of Wagner: but the Liszt of the final portion of his life is near and immediate, remembered by pupils who are still playing at concerts and by many musicians who do not consider themselves really old people yet. There are many men alive to-day who were aided by Liszt, with advice, instruction and money.

He used to call his life from 1861 a *vie trifurquée*, because it was divided between Rome, Budapest and Weimar. In 1857 he had been made a tertiary of the order of St. Francis of Assisi. Later he was admitted into several minor orders, which carried the title of Abbé, and allowed him to wear priestly garb. But he was not a confessor or celebrant. He might discard his cassock, and was free to marry, had he elected to marry. For ten years he lived almost entirely in Rome, striving to arouse official interest in the reform he advocated in religious music: "But I was disappointed," he says, "because of the want of education among the cardinals." What did

the high clergy care about an idealized condition of music in the Church! So he founded, first at Regensburg, and then at Eichstädt, places for the study, practice, and propagation of what he held to be the truly suitable music for religious service. He wrote many works—oratorios, masses and psalms, among them the *Missa Choralis* (1877) and the *Hungarian Coronation Mass*. In the summer months he taught in his home at Weimar, and in the winter at the Budapest Conservatoire. He took no fees from his pupils. For forty years he had not played in public for his own gain. He was just comfortably off, having made several millions by his art, and given the most of it away.

During the last years he was fêted as a national hero by the Hungarian nation. The whole world seems to have loved, admired, and respected him in equal measure. When he came to England, in 1886, after an absence of forty-five years, the English intellectual and social worlds held themselves most peculiarly honoured. And when, a few weeks after this visit, he died, there was a mourning that strikes us to-day as having been sincere.

Two qualities, one of manner, the other of action, had operated through his life to bring about this unusual public regard, without respect for his work in music.

The first was his self-possession. He knew his natural powers; he had wide experience of the world, even when in his 'teens; and the reading,

thought, and observation he carried on gave him a wide culture: therefore he was without any "inferiority complex," and consequently did not offend or distress people by aggressiveness or diffidence. He was always at ease, and he put other men and women at ease with him.

The second quality was his generosity, before which one stands amazed. It was active for more than sixty years. A letter came to him on his death-bed, from a pupil in want of money; it arrived at a moment when the old man was conscious, and he asked his daughter Cosima to attend to it: she said she would do so shortly; but Liszt said, "No, no; not shortly: at once. The man is in want. We might forget." In 1839 the people in Pesth raised money for a statue to Liszt; he gave his consent to the scheme, provided the commission went to a poor struggling sculptor whom he named. In 1845 the plan of erecting a Beethoven statue at Bonn looked like falling through because subscriptions ceased; and Liszt contributed the whole of the balance. A series of concerts in 1830 had proved disastrous to the organizer, and a loss of six thousand pounds had been incurred; the agent was distressed, because this meant his ruin; but Liszt—he was then nineteen—accepted responsibility for the loss, and in a little while earned and paid over that large sum. The disaster to Pesth in 1837, when the river flooded the town, found Liszt among the largest subscribers to the fund for the relief of the

sufferers—he gave the entire proceeds of several concerts. He did not play in public for his own profit after the age of thirty-six, his last personal concert being one given at Elizabethgrad in 1847.

It seems that he was a sort of wise father to all young musicians who came his way for fifty years.

And he could not rest under the imputation of having slighted any individual, but must at once try to put the matter right: the story of Wagner and Liszt, as related by Wagner, is a moving example of this. The two young men met casually in Paris. Liszt was already a man of power and high social position; Wagner was a quite unknown and unproved composer, who, in coming to the other, could not appear other than one of a large number, without any distinguishing qualities to compel special consideration. But Wagner, jealous, proud, sensitive, and very suspicious, imagined he was deliberately slighted, and for some time spoke in harsh terms of Liszt. When Liszt heard of the state of Wagner's mind, he strove by every means to correct the misunderstanding. Wagner says:

> He was surprised to find himself violently misunderstood by a man scarcely known to him, and whose acquaintance now seemed of value to him [this clause does not read well]. I am still moved when I remember the eager, repeated efforts he made to change my opinion

of him, even before he knew my works [but this last clause blunts the other]. He acted, not for artistic sympathy, but from the purely human wish to discontinue a casual disharmony between another human being and himself; perhaps he felt also an infinitely tender misgiving that he had really hurt me unconsciously. He who knows the selfishness and the terrible insensibility of our social life, and particularly the insensibility in the relations of modern artists to each other, must be struck with wonder, nay, delight, by the treatment I experienced from this remarkable man.

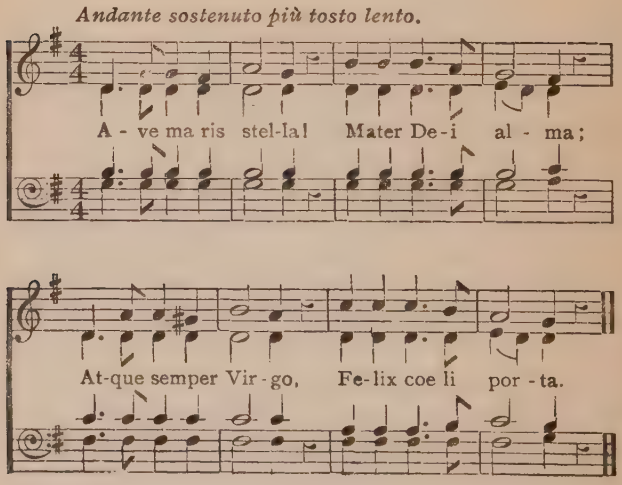
VI

It does not come into the plan of this notice to discuss the music of Franz Liszt. We either like it entirely, or dislike it entirely. If we are content with an external poetical guide to the pieces, we do not mind its rhapsodical style, its melodic and harmonic weakness, its successions of what, from the regard of pure music, are but arbitrary sections, and its frequent falling into commonplace. If our musical nature requires lofty thought, ideal sentiment, and powerful construction, we have to reject it; though probably we are always delighted with the Hungarian Rhapsodies.

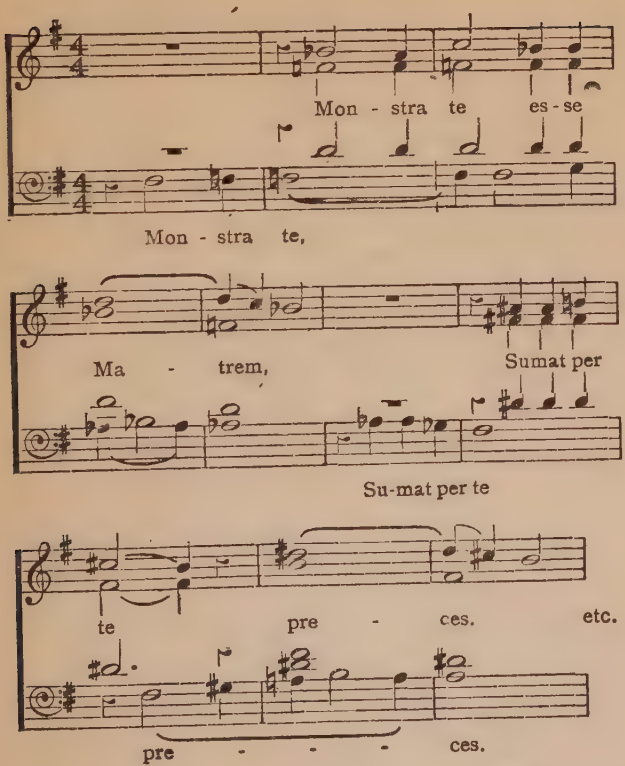
The larger works are played as infrequently as the larger works of Berlioz, yet it is easier to

come to a critical opinion of Liszt than of Berlioz. The general opinion is that his chief successes lie with the *Dante* symphony (1847-1855) and the *Faust* symphony (1854-1857), because the subjects of those two works were most closely in sympathy with the mind of the composer, and because the character of the subjects is most clear to the outside world.

The church music of Liszt is not widely known in England, and it is not likely ever to be used here in large measure. Its character may be seen in the following extracts from an *Ave Maris Stella*. The first passage is the opening of the piece.



The second passage :



is from the latter portion of the first part of the piece: it illustrates the kind of modulation used in the music.

Music of the kind written by composers like

Berlioz, Liszt, Richard Strauss, and (in part) Tchaikowski and Dvorak, affects us differently at different times. One day it will please, and even move deeply. Another day it may displease, and even repell.

The reason is, that the music has not the power to create mood in the listener. It is an illustrative dependant upon some outside matter, as a sentimental story, a poetical event, or a declared philosophical idea, which we are not always minded to contemplate. Its appeal therefore is not to the intellectual or the higher spiritual faculties, which are always willing to be stimulated, but to those sensuous or sentimental faculties which are not so readily made active in art. We live by mind and spirit, and so the greater music is that which belongs to mind and spirit.

All the permanent art of the world is the art that goes on moulding and fashioning men to its own likeness, so that the art is more vital a hundred years later than it is in the year of its production, and still more vital two hundred years later. Pure art operates on us in the way of nature, helping us to grow according to our kind. It never dies, and it never becomes old-fashioned. The religion, philosophy, or particular idealism from which it rose may pass, yet the art remains, exactly as literature still lives in a language that is dead.

The art which pleases or depresses according to our temporary mood in the end decays, because

it has not the power to create a living, self-developing mood in us. Since Liszt's music belongs to this kind of art, one can say that it will not form part of the permanent possessions of humanity.

He has never been widely played, except by pianists. Even among pianists he has never competed with Chopin. During his lifetime his larger works were neglected, in England, France, Italy, and Spain, and they were almost as much neglected in Germany, Austria and Russia. Singers use his *Lorelei* song a good deal. Organists play the Fantasia and Fugue on the choral from Meyerbeer's *Le Prophète*. Occasionally the *Hungaria* or *Les Préludes* can be heard at orchestral concerts. On special occasions a mass is used in the Teutonic or Bohemian countries. The piano concerto in E flat is played every day somewhere. But of the remainder of his vast mass of compositions, perhaps not ten per cent. has been heard in the twentieth century.

It is by the impression of his personality, by his piano playing and manner of conducting music, that Liszt remains a living influence on the music of to-day.

[April-May, '24]

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